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THE  
FATHERS

OF

The German Reformed Church

IN

EUROPE AND AMERICA.

BY

REV. H. HARBAUGH, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "THE SAINTED DEAD," "HEAVENLY RECOGNITION," "HEAVENLY HOME,"  
"BIRDS OF THE BIBLE," "UNION WITH THE CHURCH," "THE LIFE OF  
SCHLATTER," AND "GOLDEN CENSER."

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Like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang  
a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.—SONG OF SOLOMON, iv. 4.

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EDITED BY

REV. D. Y. HEISLER, A.M.

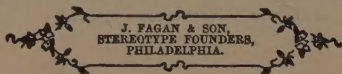
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TO THE  
FAITHFUL COMPANION  
AND  
FATHERLESS CHILDREN  
OF THE  
SAINTED AUTHOR,  
THIS VOLUME IS  
*Affectionately Dedicated,*  
BY THE  
EDITOR.

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## PREFACE.

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IN offering to the public the third volume of Dr. Harbaugh's work on "THE FATHERS OF THE GERMAN REFORMED CHURCH IN EUROPE AND AMERICA," we wish to preface it with a few words of explanation.

In this volume we present the lives and labors of those of the Fathers whose ministry commenced subsequent to the year 1786, and terminated, with few exceptions, prior to 1850.<sup>1</sup> This period marks the transition of the Church from the use exclusively of the German to the prevailing use of the English language, and also the gradual introduction of those foreign elements, in doctrine and practice, which the English language and English modes of thought necessarily brought with them.

The order of arrangement in this volume is precisely the same as that observed in the two preceding ones. The Sketches or Memoirs are throughout

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<sup>1</sup> Another volume by the Editor, bringing the history down to the present time, Jan., 1872, is ready for the press, and will be issued immediately after this is out.

arranged, first, with reference to the time when the several ministers entered upon the duties of their office, and, secondly, with reference to the time of their decease. This order is best suited to explain, and set in proper light, the peculiar character of their life and ministry. Each period, in the history of the Church, has its own distinctive spirit and genius, and the ministry of that period must always partake more or less of this reigning spirit of the age; and only in the light of this spirit, far deeper and broader than that of any single person, can we estimate properly and do full justice to the life and labors of God's servants.

All the manuscripts, which came into the Editor's hands, were carefully revised and corrected, where this last was found to be necessary. Some of the Sketches, furnished by correspondents, were in such a condition as to require a great deal of correction, and often a complete re-arrangement of the materials; and in not a few cases, they had to be entirely re-written to render them fit for the press. It was found also, that, in some instances, the Author had failed to prepare any memoirs whatever. In such cases, especially where the ministry of the persons, thus accidentally overlooked, lay in this earlier period, the deficiencies, as far as this could be done, were supplied by the Editor. In this delicate part of his work, he availed him-



self of the same course that was pursued by the lamented Author. When, for instance, suitable sketches had been prepared and published in our Church periodicals, or elsewhere, these sketches were used; sometimes in nearly the exact language of the writers; sometimes in the way of a free and independent rendering; and sometimes by simply using the materials furnished, and constructing the sketches *de novo*. So also in the case of private communications relating to the life and labors of ministers in different sections of the country.

In some instances the Editor has seen fit to append foot-notes, especially in the way of giving public credit to contributors. In all such cases, the Editor's notes are indicated by his initials. So, also, in regard to the Sketches or Memoirs prepared by him, the nature and extent of his labors are indicated in the notes at the bottom of the page. It is due, also, both to the Editor and the lamented Author, to say, that, in some instances, full and proper credit could not well be given to correspondents and contributors. In such cases of undesigned deficiencies, we beg the indulgence of our kind friends.<sup>1</sup>

We wish simply yet to say that the work of pre-

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<sup>1</sup> The difficulty lay in the fact that some of the sketches furnished had no names attached to them.

paring these Sketches of our deceased ministers for the press was undertaken in obedience to an appointment of Synod. But although the work appears thus to wear somewhat the character of a duty, yet has it been truly a most pleasant task — a genuine “labor of love.” To recount the pious and heroic deeds of the sainted dead is surely among the sweetest and noblest tasks, if task it must be called. To us, indeed, it has been a most welcome and pleasant employment, not only because of the “Fathers” whose faith and piety these Memoirs seek to preserve and perpetuate, but also on account of him whose hands, now cold in death, piously gathered up and put in proper order these “deeds of love.” May the beautiful garland, which he wove for others, encircle his own brow, and continue to shed around his memory, as well as theirs who went before him to the spirit land, the sweet fragrance of a pure and endless life!

And, finally, may our own poor services, as well as the pious deeds and victorious faith of the sainted dead, be acceptable “unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; — to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

D. Y. H.

MONT ALTO, PA.,  
New-Year's Day, 1872.

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THE FATHERS  
OF THE  
GERMAN REFORMED CHURCH  
IN  
AMERICA.





# THE FATHERS

OF THE

## GERMAN REFORMED CHURCH.

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REV. ANDREW LORETZ.<sup>1</sup>

17\*\* — 1812.

AMONG the curiosities of history and of historical eccentricities, we may place the strangely confused and contradictory accounts we have of the Rev. Andrew Loretz. All kinds of mistakes have been made concerning him, both as regards his name and his personal identity, as if it were uncertain whether indeed he had a “local habitation and a name” among the sons of men. And, yet, he was neither a wandering ghost nor “will-o’-the-wisp,” but a real, genuine, substantial man — of a “rationable soul and body subsisting,” and, besides, a man of commanding genius and extraordinary attainments.

We shall here record all that we could learn of

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by the Editor.

his life and history, and thus rescue, if possible, his good name and his earnest and extensive labors from oblivion.

In another part of this Work,<sup>1</sup> we have the following interesting account of him; but, unfortunately, under a different name. The author says: "He was a Swiss. About the year 1789, he commenced preaching and ministering in a wide field, embracing a large part of both Carolinas, from Orange County, in North Carolina, to beyond the river Saluda, in South Carolina—a distance of nearly two hundred and fifty miles. He is said to have been a man of much ability as a preacher. He was zealous in his work, and much success crowned his labors. He was active in the ministry up to the time of his death, which occurred in 1812. His death left the congregations in that region, which he had served so long and so faithfully, for a length of time without any regular ministrations."

Dr. Harbaugh was evidently misled by a mistake of the printer, who, in the authorities consulted, had substituted the name of Lentz for that of Loretz. He states, however, in a note, that the latter name, or that of "Loritz" rather, had been suggested to him as probably the true one. The suggestion was correct, only that the orthography was wrong.

The Rev. Andrew Loretz is still remembered in North Carolina. He was a man of superior abilities, extensive learning, and, in his day, "regarded

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. II., p. 406.

as one of the best pulpit orators in the Carolinas." His Eulogy on the life and character of George Washington, delivered at the time of his death, and afterwards printed, is spoken of as a magnificent affair. We obtained these facts from the Rev. John G. Fritchey, who, seventeen years after his decease, became successor to Father Loretz in his pastoral charge in Lincoln County, North Carolina. At that time — 1828-'29 — his widow and children were still living in that vicinity.

In a different part of this Work,<sup>1</sup> we find a short account of a Rev. Andrew Loritz, who, in 1785, was located at Tulpehocken, in Lebanon County, Pa., and had charge of a number of congregations in that region of country; among which were Swatara, Heidelberg, Lebanon, and the Hill church. His Swiss dialect, we are told, interfered with his usefulness there; and, accordingly, he soon returned to Europe, whence he had come in 1784. The circumstance that this good man, who, on his return to the Old country, was furnished with the most honorable testimonials by the "Fathers," was a "Swiss," and the Rev. Andrew Loretz, who, a few years later, in 1789, settled in North Carolina, was also a native of Switzerland, at first led us to suppose that the two were identical — that, having returned to Europe, where his family was still living, and remaining there a few years, he had come back again and settled in the South. The order of dates seemed to favor this supposition; and we, accordingly, prepared a note to this effect and appended

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. II., p. 403.

it to the Memoir of Father Boger, who, during the latter part of his theological course, was one of his pupils.<sup>1</sup>

On further inquiry, we found that all these suppositions were erroneous. The Rev. Andrew Loretz of North Carolina celebrity was neither the Rev. Andrew "Lentz," p. 406, of volume second, nor the Rev. Andrew "Loritz," p. 403, of the same volume, but the son of the Rev. Andrew Loretz, as the name ought to have been written, — the good Swiss pastor of Tulpehocken, in Pennsylvania.

Whether the son emigrated to this country in company with his father, while the rest of the family remained still in Europe; or whether he came over subsequently, and perhaps on the strength of representations made by the father; or whether he came over to join his father in the New World, not knowing anything of his return to the fatherland, we, of course, cannot say. One thing, however, seems to be pretty certain, namely, this: that he landed somewhere in the North, and proceeded thence to his field of labor in the sunny South, halting for a little while, on his way, in Maryland. The family of Mr. Loretz is said to have been quite respectable — occupying a high social position in the South. One of his descendants — a son, if we mistake not — was placed, by the suffrages of his fellow-citizens, in an important and responsible civil position.

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<sup>1</sup> See a sketch of his life in another part of this Work.

As a preacher, Mr. Loretz stood very high. The traditions afloat concerning him are extravagant in their praise of his eloquence. He was compared, by the populace, to a living fountain, whence a torrent of words streamed forth almost spontaneously. Without attaching too much importance to these uncertain traditions, we may well suppose that he was a popular and fluent speaker — possessing the elements of a genuine orator. That he was a man of more than ordinary energy, and perhaps of religious zeal also, is certain from the fact that his pastoral labors extended over a region of country some two hundred and fifty miles in extent, and that, too, in an age when roads were often next to impassable, and travelling exceedingly difficult and even perilous. That, under the circumstances, he should have “served so long and faithfully” in this extensive field, is evidence, if not of his superior natural endowments, at least of his religious zeal and fervor — his deep and abiding interest in “the kingdom of God.”

His remains, we understand, are buried in the graveyard attached to the “Loretz church,” about four miles out from Lincolnton, Lincoln County, North Carolina. We feel sorry that our imperfect sketch leaves him, like the good Melchizedek of old, almost literally “without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life,” associated with his name and ministry; but in that better, fairer, faultless record on high, both his name and all his pious deeds are registered, according to the beautiful saying of

our Saviour: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God; but even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows" — "and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

## REV. PHILIP REINHOLD PAULI.

1742 — 1815.

MR. PAULI was born in the city of Magdeburg, Prussia, on the 22d of June, 1742. His father, Ernest L. Pauli, was Superintendent, Consistorial Counselor, and Court Preacher, in the principality of Bernburg. His son, Philip Reinhold, commenced his studies at the public school in his native city, Magdeburg, and afterwards continued them in the Gymnasium in Berlin, and finally completed his course of literary study in the universities of Halle and Leipzig. After he concluded his course of study, he spent some time in travelling through Europe with a wealthy uncle.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Pauli arrived in this country in 1783, after an exceedingly distressing and dangerous voyage. He began his useful labors in this country as a teacher of an academy in Philadelphia, where he remained six years, having also been honored, at some point in that period of his labors, with the degree of Master of Arts. He came to this country unmarried; but about a year after his arrival, Feb.

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<sup>1</sup> For the greater part of the facts in this sketch, we are indebted to a brief account of Mr. Pauli's life signed W. P., in Rupp's Hist. of Berks and Lebanon Counties, pp. 451, 452.

14, 1784, he was united in holy matrimony with Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. John Musch, of Easton, Penna.

While engaged as a teacher in Philadelphia, he turned his attention privately to the study of theology with a view to entering the ministry. In the Cötal Minutes of 1786, it is said: "Mr. Pauli, on account of indisposition, made application by letter for examination as a candidate for the ministry; on account of the best recommendations from Philadelphia and other places, which he presented to Cötus, his request was granted." It appears that this first examination was not entirely satisfactory. We find in the Minutes of Cötus for the year 1787, as follows: "The congregation in Frankfort brought in a petition, asking that Mr. Pauli might be appointed and ordained as their minister. This man was examined last year by a committee of Cötus, and was not at that time found adequately prepared. Hence it was resolved that Mr. Pauli be required to submit to another examination."

He was ordained in the year 1789, and became pastor of the churches Worcester and Whitpaine<sup>1</sup> in Skippack, and others in the vicinity, succeeding Rev. Winkhaus in that charge. Here he officiated

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<sup>1</sup> "The Rev. Pauli from Worcester and Whitpaine congregations, who had received ordination several years ago, requested the Rev. Cötus to receive him as a member, which request was unanimously acceded to, and he accordingly admitted to a seat and vote." — *Min. Cötus*, 1792. Did his ordination not make him a member of Cötus? — or had he been ordained elsewhere?



several years; and in 1793 transferred his labors to Reading, Pa., with the approval of Cötus. Here he labored with zeal and activity, as pastor of the German Reformed church, for a period of twenty-one years and nine months. In addition to his ministerial duties, he also, for several years, conducted a select Latin and French school.

Mr. Pauli seldom wrote his sermons, but collected materials for them during the week, and on Saturday arranged them into a regular skeleton, from which he preached. He was regarded in his day as an eloquent preacher. His sermons were generally simple and affecting, especially at funerals, where he seldom preached without weeping, or causing others to shed tears. His church was generally well filled.

His leisure hours were generally employed in reading, or visiting his members. He was diligent in the catechization of the children of the church. During the summer season he generally devoted the Sabbath afternoon to this pleasing duty; and previous to the confirmation of the youth, he usually gave them a course of regular instruction, extending over a period of two months.

Mr. Pauli was regular in attending synodical meetings, and always took an active part in the passing business. He was frequently invited abroad to attend the consecration of churches and other public meetings, at a distance from home. He was possessed of very agreeable social qualities. He was mild, cheerful, and generous in his disposition, and regular in his habits and course of life.

Mr. Pauli died on the 27th of January, in the year of our Lord 1815. His departure was as a sweet sleep that transferred him into a better world. On the following Sabbath his mortal remains were committed to the tomb. Notwithstanding the weather was very inclement, a large congregation assembled to offer the last testimony of love to their aged pastor. The Rev. William Hendel, D. D., delivered an appropriate funeral sermon, on 2 Kings ii. 12, in the large Lutheran church; after which the procession moved to the German Reformed church, where a brief but impressive address was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Dechant, after which his body was solemnly deposited in the graveyard adjoining the German Reformed church in Reading, where it awaits in hope the resurrection of the just. His wife, who died Nov. 12th, 1839, aged seventy-seven years, one month and eighteen days, is buried by his side. On his tombstone is the following:

Hier ruhet

PHILIP REINHOLD PAULI.

Er wurde gebohren den 22sten Juni, 1742;

War Prediger dieser Gemeinde 22 Jahr;

Und starb den 26sten Januar, 1815.

War alt worden

72 J., 7 M., und 4 T.

## REV. JOHN ERNST.

1744 — 1804.

JOHN ERNST<sup>1</sup> was born on the 22d of February, 1744, but where we are not able to say. He came to York County, about the year 1790, from the "Conestoga settlement" in Lancaster County, Penna. How or where he spent the first forty or forty-five years of his life we have not been able to ascertain. The probability, however, is, that he had been engaged in some secular calling, and that he devoted himself to the ministerial office only after he was pretty well advanced in years. He is said to have been an uneducated man, but of good natural talents, and a ready and able speaker.

He commenced preaching in the "Pigeon Hill church" about the year 1790, as near as we can ascertain, and also at East Berlin about the same time; and probably elsewhere. Mr. Ernst was, as far as we know, the first minister who preached regularly in Berlin, and was the founder of the German Reformed church in that place, and for a long time the only minister located there. He used to preach in an old school-house near where the church now stands.

Mr. Ernst must have served these congregations

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<sup>1</sup>The facts of this sketch were furnished by the Rev. E. H. Hoffheins.

for a number of years, perhaps twelve or thirteen, or even more. During the earlier part of his ministry he does not seem to have been ordained, as the Rev. Mr. Otterbein came regularly once a year from Baltimore to administer the Lord's Supper to his people in the Pigeon Hill church. Nor is it certain, as far as our information goes, that he was even regularly connected with the Synod. It is certain that he was not during the first few years of his ministry in York County, from the fact that the church at Holtzschwam, some three or four miles northwest of Pigeon Hill church, and between the latter and East Berlin, was locked against him, on the very ground that he was not in connection with the Synod, and that he belonged to what were called the "Otterbein and Güting people," — out of which grew the sect of the "United Brethren in Christ."

Mr. Ernst is spoken of as having been an earnest, warm-hearted, and faithful minister of the gospel, and much concerned for the salvation of souls. One aged member of the congregation, now served by Rev. E. H. Hoffheins, still remembers much of his preaching, and even some of the texts. In answer to the question, "What sort of a man was Mr. Ernst?" she replied, with evident feeling, "O der Ernst war ein braver Mann,"—"O Mr. Ernst was a good man." He is generally represented as having been a godly, pious, and sincere man, and affectionately devoted to the well-being of his people.

Mr. Ernst died in Berlin, where he had lived, on the 30th of August, 1804, aged 60 years, 6 months, and 8 days, during the prevalence of a fatal epidemic,

supposed by some to have been the yellow fever. It proved fatal in a great many instances. "In passing through the graveyards at Abbottstown and Berlin," says Rev. Mr. Hoffheins, "I discovered a great many tombstones bearing the date of 1804. Most of these persons are said to have died in Berlin during 'the time of the great sickness.' The epidemic is said to have been so general in Berlin, that nearly all the inhabitants were prostrated by it, and that none were left to assist or comfort the sick and dying, nor even to bury the dead. Coffins were furnished from a distance. One of Mr. Ernst's daughters died about two weeks after his own death; and, it is said, no one could be found able to prepare and dress her for the coffin, and that this sad duty had at last to be performed by the sorrowing mother and disconsolate widow!"

Mr. Ernst and his family are said to have faithfully attended to the sick, the dying, and the dead, until they themselves fell victims to "the pestilence that walketh in darkness and the destruction that wasteth at noonday," — a fine mark of a true shepherd. He is buried in Berlin, near the church — some say under the church — by the side of his wife and daughter. Three plain tombstones mark the spot of their earthly resting-place. Rev. D. B. Ernst of Saegerstown, Pa., is one of his grandchildren; and so also is the wife of Rev. J. Naille. On Mr. Ernst's tombstone, we read:

Hier ruhet der Leib  
JOHANNES ERNST,  
Geb. den 22sten Feb., 1744;  
Gestorben den 30sten Aug., 1804;  
Alt 60 J., 6 M., 8 T.

## REV. JOHN JACOB LAROSE.

1755 — 1845.

THE subject of this sketch<sup>1</sup> was the son of John Lewis and Kunigunda Larose. His father was descended from a French family of noble birth, and his mother's maiden name was Schadin. They were members of the Reformed Church, and were compelled to leave France in consequence of religious intolerance and persecution. They came to America some time previous to 1740, and settled in Macungie Township, Lehigh County, Pa. Here John Jacob was born early in February, 1755. His childhood and youth were spent with his parents on a farm. Subsequently, he learned the tailoring business, and for some time worked at his trade.

In early infancy he was baptized; and, after being duly instructed, he was received, by confirmation, as a member of the Reformed Church, somewhere in the region of his nativity. By whom he was confirmed is not known — probably either by the Rev. Abraham Blumer or the Rev. Conrad Steiner.

Late in the fall of 1776, he enlisted in the Revolu-

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<sup>1</sup> Rewritten and arranged, with some changes, from a sketch by the Rev. I. H. Reiter, of Miamisburg, Ohio. — D. Y. H.

tionary army. He was in the battle of Trenton, December 26th, of the same year, and assisted in capturing the Hessians. He served in the army faithfully and patriotically for six months, returning home in the spring of 1777. During the summer of the same year, he went South, and located in Guilford County, N. C. Here, while working at his trade, he paid special attention to religious reading and meditation.

In the year 1780, he was joined in marriage to Miss Barbara Giffit or Gift, by whom he had eight children — five sons and three daughters.

About this time he became deeply impressed that he ought to preach the gospel of the grace of God. He commenced a course of private reading; and, as there was no Reformed pastor stationed there at the time, he would occasionally converse with and recite to a Presbyterian minister, who encouraged him in his efforts to qualify himself for the sacred office and work of the ministry. He pursued his studies in this private way for several years, and, as he had opportunity, exercised and improved his gifts by occasionally speaking in public. In the absence of a Reformed Ecclesiastical Judicatory, he was examined and licensed to preach the gospel by ministers of the Presbyterian Church. The time when this took place is not definitely known, but must have been somewhere between the years 1784 and 1790. It is known that in 1784 he visited his home in Pennsylvania, to receive his patrimony, his father having died. He purchased some books in Philadelphia, on his way back to North Carolina,

with a view of prosecuting his studies; and soon after preached to some Reformed congregations in Guilford County, more or less fully organized, until his removal to Ohio.

About the 25th of September, 1804, he started with his family from North Carolina, with a four-horse team; and, after being six weeks on the way, and travelling seven hundred miles, he arrived safely, on the 4th of November, in Miami Township, Montgomery County, Ohio, and settled there on a section of land previously "entered" by him, according to an Act of Congress. The country was then an almost unbroken wilderness, and many trials and privations were experienced by them.

In the year 1805, he commenced preaching in private houses, forming mission points, some of which subsequently became regularly organized congregations, such as the St. John's, Stettler's, Twin Creek, and others. In 1812, he removed to Highland County, Ohio, and served a charge, composed of Brush Creek, New Market, and Rockyfork, for three years. While here, his wife died on Whitsunday, 1813, and was buried in the graveyard at Brush Creek. In 1816, having broken up house-keeping, he made his home with his son-in-law, Mr. Em. Gebhart, one mile southeast of Miamisburg, where he remained for the next two years, preaching irregularly to a few congregations. During the next five years he resided with his children in the vicinity of Eaton, Preble County, Ohio. While here, he preached for a longer or shorter period to the following congregations, viz., Zion, Jacob's,



and Tom's Run, Preble County, and Stettler's in Montgomery County.

He preached for many years simply as a licentiate, perhaps for the want of opportunity to become clothed with the full power and functions of the ministry. Finally, however, in accordance with the instructions given by the Synod of the United States, he was regularly ordained, May 22d, 1821, at Canton, Ohio. He was at the same time also appointed to visit the vacant congregations in Columbiana County, Ohio, and advised, if called by them, to accept their call. It does not appear that he ever visited them, or that he received the anticipated call.

During the months of August and September, 1822, he made a missionary tour to the States of Indiana and Kentucky, seeking out the destitute members of the Reformed Church, preaching to them the gospel, baptizing their children, and laboring in a general way to promote the cause of Christ.

In 1826, he made his home permanently with Mr. Em. Gebhart, his son-in-law. Up to this time he had been serving different congregations regularly, but henceforth he preached only occasionally; and, in 1830, he became superannuated, and quit preaching altogether. The next fifteen years he spent in retirement, devoting himself to religious reading, meditation, prayer, and communion with God. The last few years of his life were marked by a kind of "second childhood," as he did not appear to recognize clearly either persons or things around him.

He died, mainly of old age, November 17th, 1845, aged 90 years, 9 months, and some days. His remains rest in the graveyard at Miamisburg, Ohio. His tombstone is a common limestone dressed, about four feet high and eighteen inches wide, bearing the following inscription :

“ In memory of Rev. John Jacob Larose ; died Nov. 17th, 1845, in the 91st year of his age. A soldier of the cross, and of his country in the achievement of her liberties.”

He was a man of irreproachable character ; an humble, devoted, and faithful Christian ; deeply and earnestly pious, and truly exemplary in life and conduct — a genuine disciple — a man of God in the best and deepest sense of the term !

Father Larose was a self-made man. His education or literary and scientific attainments were limited ; but he was a man well versed in the Holy Scriptures ; and his preaching, though plain and unadorned, was of an earnest, pointed, and eminently scriptural character. His speaking talent was moderate ; but while he had nothing of the orator about him, he was yet, to some extent at least, an acceptable and edifying preacher.

The life of this simple-hearted man furnishes another instance of what can be accomplished by a person with but humble gifts and limited attainments, if only he is in deep sympathy with the mind of God, willing to be used as an instrument for good in the Church of Christ, earnest and faithful in the discharge of his duty, and fully devoted to the cause of the Redeemer. “ The memory of the wicked shall rot ; but the righteous are held in everlasting remembrance.”

## REV. JONATHAN RAHAUSER.

1764—1817.

JONATHAN RAHAUSER was born in Dover Township, York County, Pa., on the 14th of December, in the year of our Lord 1764. His parents were Daniel and Barbara Rahauser. He was baptized in his infancy; and in due time he ratified, by his own act, the vows of his parents in his behalf, and by confirmation was admitted into full communion with the Church.

He resided with his parents on a farm till he was in his twenty-first year. At that time he resolved to devote his talents and his life to the service of his Divine Master in the work of the holy ministry. On the 17th of August, 1785, he commenced his studies, preparatory to entering upon the sacred office, under the care of the Rev. Dr. Hendel, in Lancaster, Pa. Here he remained, devoting himself especially to the study of the ancient languages and theology with great diligence, till the 22d of March, 1789—a little over three years and a half. At this time he preached his first sermon, in Bier's church, about twelve miles from Lancaster, from the words, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in right-

eousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

Shortly after this he received a call from the churches in what was then called in general Shamokin,<sup>1</sup> on both sides of the Susquehanna, about the junction of the West and North Branches, namely, Mahony, Sunbury, Middle Creek, and Buffalo Valley. Having obtained license to preach, he accepted this call; and accompanied by Mr. Jacob Meier, the representative of the congregations, he arrived in his new and first field of labor September 23d, 1789. He was not yet ordained. He continued, however, in these congregations, performing such duties as came within the province of a licentiate, till June, 1790, when he attended Cötus, assembled at that time in Falkoner Swamp, as a candidate for ordination. Here he received a certificate recommending him as a fit person for ordination; and application was made to the Synod of Holland, in which body the power of allowing ordination still rested at that time, for permission to ordain him. He returned to his charge in Shamokin, and labored as before till the next meeting of Cötus, which assembled in Lancaster, Pa., on the 27th of June, 1791. No reply had been received from

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<sup>1</sup>There were German Reformed churches here as early as 1776. In the Minutes of Cötus held in Lancaster, May 1st, 1776, occurs the following: "Art. IV. Verschiedene Gemeinden in Schamokin thaten Ansuchen dass sie wechselsweise von Predigern möchten besucht werden. *Resolutum.* Es sollen etlichemahl im Jahr Prediger sie besuchen, bei ihnen predigen, und die übrigen Actus verrichten."

Holland, and there came before the Cötus an earnest request from his congregations that he might be ordained. Whereupon the action of Cötus is as follows: "As the Reverend Cötus has received no reply from their Reverend Fathers in reference to the ordination of Messrs. J. Philip Stock and Jonathan Rahausser, and the circumstances of the congregations are very pressing, it was resolved that both these brethren be ordained."<sup>1</sup> This was on the first day of the session; and the ordination took place in the church at Lancaster the same evening, the solemnities being conducted by Rev. Dr. Hengel, and Revs. Helfrich and Blumer. He returned to his people, and continued to labor among them with acceptance and success.

Meanwhile the congregation in Hagerstown, Md., and others in its vicinity, became vacant, and Mr. Rahausser received a call to become their pastor. In June, 1792, he paid them a visit, preached for them, and accepted their call. Early in October of the same year he removed to Hagerstown, and on the 10th of the month preached his introductory sermon in that place. The Cötus, at its meeting in Philadelphia, April 27th, 1793, approved of the change he had made.

The Hagerstown charge, when Mr. Rahausser took it under his pastoral care, consisted of Hagerstown, Funkstown, Boonsboro, Troxels, Greencastle, Mercersburg, Besore's, Millerstown, Emmittsburg, and Apple's. Thus his field of labor, besides Washington County and part of Frederick, Md.,

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<sup>1</sup>See Minutes of Cötus, 1791, p. 4.

extended also into Franklin and Adams counties, Pa. This was truly a formidable field. Over all this wide district of country he travelled, preaching, and administering the sacraments on the Sabbath, and visiting the sick, and attending to funerals during the week. His farthest congregation was twenty-eight miles from the place of his residence. He found it necessary frequently to leave home in the night, and travel through rain and snow to reach his appointments and discharge his pressing duties. In 1809, he was enabled somewhat to reduce the extent of his charge by resigning the churches at Emmitsburg and Apple's to his brother, the Rev. Frederick Rahauser, who took charge of them.

Still his field remained large, and his labors incessant and exhausting. During the first ten years of his ministry in the Hagerstown charge, he preached 1361 sermons. During this time he also baptized and confirmed a very large number, as is shown by the records of the churches. In the same ten years he joined in marriage twenty-five hundred couple! After this he has omitted keeping a record of his labors. Some of those whom he catechized and confirmed are still living in the bounds of the churches which he served, and many also in different parts of the Western States, whither they have removed. "These bear witness to his labor and zeal in the cause of his Divine Master."<sup>1</sup>

In the fall of 1816, he was taken by a very violent cold, which brought on gradually a serious affection of the liver; and the state of his health was

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Judge Wotring.

now such that he was not able to preach during the whole of that winter.

In the spring of 1817, he revived with the resuscitation of nature and resumed his labors, which he continued without interruption during the summer. His system, however, had received a severe shock; his elasticity was in a great measure gone, and the end drew near.

On the last of August in that year, he preached at St. Paul's church, nine miles west of Hagerstown. During the services, there having been heavy rain, the Canococheague Creek, which he was compelled to cross on his return home, suddenly rose to an unexpected height. In attempting to cross the swollen waters in his one-horse carriage, he was near being swept down by the current; providentially, he reached the shore, yet not without having his clothes thoroughly drenched. He reached home wet, chilled, and weak. A spell of sickness was the consequence of this exposure. From that time he lingered only about four weeks, when he died, Sept. 25th, 1817.

He lies buried in the graveyard connected with the German Reformed church in Hagerstown, Md. His tomb is covered by a marble slab horizontally resting upon a brick foundation, and bears the following inscription:

Zum Andenken des  
EHRWD. HERRN JONATHAN RAHAUSER,  
Deutsch-Reformirter Prediger.  
Er war geboren in York County,  
Im Staat Pennsylvanien,

Den 14ten December, 1764;  
Diente beynahe 25 Jahre in  
Hagerstadt als ein treuer  
Lehrer des Evangeliums.  
Starb den 25ten September, 1817.  
Ist altgeworden 52 Jahre, 9 Monate,  
und 9 Tage.

At his death, he left a widow and six children to mourn their loss. Some of his descendants are living in Washington County, Pa., and are highly respectable. His brother, Rev. Frederick Rahauser, now very aged and superannuated, is a member of Tiffin Classis in the Synod of Ohio and adjacent States, and resides with his son in East Liberty, near Pittsburg.<sup>1</sup>

In 1799, a call from the Lebanon congregation was presented to Mr. Rahauser, which, however, after due consideration, he declined. At the time of transition in his charge from German to English, he published an analysis of the Heidelberg Catechism. It was printed in both languages on alternate pages, and is said to have served an excellent purpose in the proper instruction of the young.

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<sup>1</sup> He has died since the above was written. A sketch of his life will be found in Vol. IV. of this Work. — D. Y. H.



## REV. JOHN THEOBALD FABER, JR.

1771 — 1833.

MR. FABER, the eldest son of the Rev. John Theobald Faber, was born in Goshenhoppen, Sept. 24th, 1771. He pursued his classical studies under the Rev. Mr. Melsheimer, a Lutheran minister, and studied theology with Dr. Hendel. His course of study extended over a period of three years.

At a meeting of Cötus in Philadelphia, May 6th, 1792, "one of the Elders present from the Old and New Goshenhoppen congregations, presented a call addressed to Mr. John T. Faber, son of the late Rev. Mr. Faber, with the request that he may be examined and set apart to the ministerial office. The Rev. Cötus resolved to accede to this request, and appointed Revs. Hendel, Helfrich, and Pomp a committee of examination, with instructions to proceed with the examination on the following morning."

The next day the committee reported "that he had not given such satisfactory answers to the dogmatical questions proposed as they had expected from him. Still, from regard to the Goshenhoppen congregations and his widowed mother, the examination was approved by a majority of votes; and it was resolved that Revs. Pomp, Dallecker, Helfrich, and Blumer be a committee to ordain him."

He located in Goshenhoppen, and served that charge for the space of fifteen years. In 1807, he received and accepted a call from Bethany and affiliated congregations in Lancaster County, Pa., where he remained till 1819, about twelve years.

After this he received a call again from his former charge in Goshenhoppen, which he accepted, and accordingly returned to the people of his first love. Here he labored up to the time of his death, a period of fourteen years, making the whole time of his service in that charge twenty-nine years. On the 31st of January, 1833, while preaching a funeral sermon in the Goshenhoppen church, and near the close of his discourse, he was attacked by a stroke of palsy, and was carried home in an unconscious state. He died on the 10th of February. It is a remarkable coincidence, that his father, forty-five years before, in the same pulpit, and also while preaching a funeral sermon, was stricken down and died of the same disease.

These two servants of Jesus Christ, father and son, are buried side by side under the altar of the church in Goshenhoppen.

In the altar, on the left side of the breastwork of the pulpit, there is a panel, corresponding with a similar one in memory of the father, on which is the following:

Zum Andenken an den  
EHRW. JOH. THEOB. FABER,  
Ehemaliger Lehrer und Prediger  
dieser Gemeinde.  
Geboren den 24ten Sept., 1771.  
Starb den 10ten Februar, 1833.

*Weiche Sacht.*

Mr. Faber was a good man. In personal appearance, he was tall and fine-looking. He was very calm, and rather slow in his preaching. It was his habit, while delivering his sermon, to lean first on one elbow and then on the other, addressing the congregation in a very leisurely and self-possessed manner, pulling out his watch very frequently during the service. Some of his descendants reside in Reading.

How solemn a death was that of the Fabers! It is always, and for all persons, a solemn thing to die; but especially for a minister in the pulpit to depart, with the very words of his message to dying men warm upon his lips, into the presence of the Judge! The thought is calculated to make one desire to discharge the duties of the holy office in the spirit of Baxter's couplet:

"To preach as though I ne'er should preach again,  
And as a dying man, to dying men!"

## REV. SAMUEL WEYBERG.

1773 — 1833.

SAMUEL WEYBERG,<sup>1</sup> son of the Rev. Casper D. Weyberg, pastor of the Race Street German Reformed church, Philadelphia, was born Sept. 19th, 1773. He was brought up and received a classical education in the city of Philadelphia. As a boy, in the time of the Revolutionary war, he had already imbibed fully the spirit of the party struggling for freedom. From the following circumstance, which is only one among many that he often related to us at home, this is evident. When the English army entered Philadelphia, as the soldiers marched through the streets, he stood in the door of his father's house, and exclaimed aloud: "Hurrah for

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<sup>1</sup> He wrote his name Whybark. Why he adopted this orthography does not appear. His sons retain it. This interesting sketch of the life of Rev. Samuel Weyberg has been prepared by his son, John C. Weyberg, and forwarded to us by Rev. John Stoneberger, of Patton, Rollinger County, Missouri, who, though almost too late, became Mr. Weyberg's successor. We give the narrative in Mr. Weyberg's own language, with the interesting historical reminiscences which he has interwoven. Mr. Stoneberger says: "It is, as far as it goes, a sober statement of facts. He does not eulogize him too much as a preacher. From what I can learn, he was a very ready and eloquent speaker."

General Washington!" To which the soldiers replied, in muttered tones: "You rebel!"

He chose for his profession the law; but on the 18th of August, 1790, his father, C. D. Weyberg, departed this life, and, by the solicitation of ministers and members of the Church, he gave up his former studies and applied himself to those preparatory to the ministry. He had for his teacher in theology the Rev. Mr. Wack,<sup>1</sup> of Pennsylvania, and was ordained to the ministry when about 18 years of age. After remaining in Philadelphia a year or two, serving his father's congregation,<sup>2</sup> his mind inclined towards the West. In consequence of having lost all his relatives by the yellow fever except his mother, and she being well cared for by the Church, he concluded to carry out his desire of going to the West. He left Philadelphia and travelled through

<sup>1</sup> It appears that he also studied some with Rev. Mr. Herman. In the Minutes of Cötus held in Philadelphia, May 6th and 7th, 1792, we find a notice as follows: "Domine Herman stated that young Samuel Weyberg had been for some time past instructed by him in the sciences connected with theology, and purposed offering himself for examination during the coming year;\* and requested that the student referred to might be ordained to the ministry after he had passed a satisfactory examination, which request was granted by the Rev. Cötus."

<sup>2</sup> We find no evidence of this elsewhere; it may mean that he preached there occasionally. There was no vacancy after the death of Dr. Weyberg, as the Rev. Mr. Winkhaus succeeded him in less than five weeks after his death. After the death of the latter, there was a vacancy of several months, 1793-1794, which he may have supplied.

\* This shows that he was not ordained "when about 18 years of age," as stated above. It could not be earlier than 1793. — D. Y. H.

Maryland, stopping in Baltimore and Georgetown on his way to the settlements in North Carolina — in the counties of Lincoln, Rowan, and Cabaras — preaching to the people as he went. Then, with a company sufficiently strong, he travelled through the wilderness of Kentucky as far west as Cincinnati. From Cincinnati he returned by way of Pittsburg to Philadelphia, where he found his mother enjoying good health, and received her parental blessing. After having seen many strange things in his travels through the wilderness, among the Indians and backwoodsmen, he received, on his return, the sincere welcome of his brethren in the Church. This was about 1792.<sup>1</sup> After some time he again left Philadelphia, going through Maryland, and stopping at Georgetown, D. C., and vicinity about one year, and arrived in North Carolina, where he remained with Rev. Andrew Loretz. Here he was married. In this union he had three children, all sons, viz., Samuel, John Casper, and Joshua. Here he remained several years, laboring in the churches of Burke, Lincoln, Rowan, and Cabaras counties, during which time he had several students under his care. One in particular I remember, about whom we often conversed. His name was George Boger, and he seems to have been a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, from the fact that father's remarks about him were always favorable.

From 1800 to 1803, the Spanish and French Gov-

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<sup>1</sup> It was after this first trip that his ordination took place, and not before it, as the writer supposes. (See Min., 1792, p. 6, § 6.) — D. Y. H.

ernments offered large inducements to the citizens of the United States to settle west of the Mississippi River, by giving to every head of a family six hundred and forty acres of land. Some persons from the counties of Lincoln, etc., had availed themselves of this offer and emigrated. In 1803, Napoleon Bonaparte sold Louisiana Territory to the United States. In the same year George F. Bollinger came to North Carolina from Louisiana, bearing a call to the Rev. Samuel Weyberg, signed by himself and many others, men of the first standing, who had been members of the German Reformed Church in North Carolina, all men of intelligence and of good character and standing in the country. The bearer of the call held a seat in the territorial and State Legislature until his death. Here was a trial. A home, a wife, three children, good society, and schools, with plenty to subsist on, all to be left behind. To go seven hundred miles west, through a country of Indians, backwoodsmen, buffaloes, wolves, and bears, and cross the Mississippi, in order to answer the call of a few disciples of Christ, who had been his former hearers in North Carolina, and who had just emerged into religious freedom — the Roman Catholic having been the established faith until the territory was purchased by the United States. To settle down in a new country, where all the meat had to be hunted out of the forest, all roads and paths, shingles and boards had to be newly made, the land cleared, meal and flour to be bought and carried forty miles — with no mail conveniences — where people

started in barges, for the purpose of commerce, to New Orleans in the spring and came back in the winter. Neither had they any intercourse with the State of North Carolina or their friends, except only as one of their number would go back, or others move in among them. To such a country as this, with its disadvantages, was he called to go. And you may ask me: "How did he decide?" He says, when the time grew short for the answer, he brought the matter to his earnest consideration, and these words came to his mind: "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head;" though He made all things and possessed all things, "He became poor that we through His poverty might be rich." Then he said, "I will go;" and was much strengthened in his decision, while he made Col. Bollinger acquainted with the fact, who was waiting for his answer.

Now, after having given his charge to the Rev. George Boger, whom he always called his own son in the Lord, he bade farewell to all, and left North Carolina, in good health and spirits, in company with Col. Bollinger. Stopping at some new settlements in the wilderness of Tennessee, he preached, and baptized their children; and then he crossed the Mississippi and preached the first Protestant sermon on the west side of that river, in a house one mile below where Jackson now stands, in Cape Girardeau County. We have living testimony of this fact at this time. He made Daniel Bollinger's, on Whitewater, one of his places to preach; seven



miles south of that, at Philip Bollinger's, on Little Whitewater, a second place; west of this, at John Bollinger's, his third; at Peter Grounds', six miles north of this, his fourth. This gentleman was an elder of his church. He had catechumens, confirmations, and communions among his people in the years 1804 and 1805, although no other civilized inhabitants were at the time nearer than forty miles; and many Indian towns were within ten miles.

His family was brought on to this country in the year 1805, with a large company of emigrants, as an addition to the new settlement. These, when added to those who were already here, aided largely in the improvement of the land, as well as in filling up the church; for they were all church-going people. This seems to have satisfied father, and pleased him well. Additions of settlers came year after year; and now we were numerous enough to have house- and barn-raising all over the settlements. Strange as it may appear, and numerous as the Indians were, I never heard or saw one complaint on his record about them, though twenty to thirty Indians might be seen every day.

The record is so torn and soiled, that I have to pass to the year 1812, when my own memory comes also to my aid. At this date I know that forty persons had been married in the settlement. A small place, about twenty miles square, was all that we knew or had yet seen of the great West, *i. e.*, Arkansas, Texas, New Mexico, Kansas, and Western Missouri. We often asked the Indians about the

country westward. They told us all they knew; but it was like asking about the man in the moon. They had no atlas, but marked on the ground the course of the rivers, and the buffalo grounds.

As regards the character of the church-members at this time, they were all a church-going people, open-hearted, and charitable. In the fall, they often brought us fine fat hogs, well dressed, without asking whether we needed anything before they brought them. The women often brought us loaves of bread in the week, besides fresh meat and vegetables through the summer. Indians themselves, in numbers of twenty at a time, to whom my mother distributed her surplus of milk, frequently brought us fine venison, bear's meat, and turkeys; also baskets and dressed deer-skins. They often lodged around our house, and with them I often hunted. It was about this time, 1814, that I received my limited education, together with others; my father being teacher.

The emigrants were now so numerous, that many of them failed getting a supply of meat on their arrival. Some of these had recourse to their guns and the woods on the Lord's day to supply themselves. I do not recollect of hearing father making a great noise about it; though I well remember hearing him using the following language in prayer, after reading the Ten Commandments: "O Lord, when the heavens are not pure in thy sight, and the angels are charged with folly, how can we approach Thee, who are great sinners; yet Thou hast said, come unto me. Be propitious, O Lord, to our unworthiness, and pardon our sins."

In the year 1816, an elderly gentleman, with his lady, moved from our settlement one hundred miles south. He never had any children. On his return to visit the neighborhood, he proposed to father to make him his heir of what he possessed, if he would live with him till his death. He thought it would better his condition, and accepted it. But in moving, while on the road, he became very much troubled and greatly distressed. On arriving at the old gentleman's residence, he still had dark forebodings, and lost his former appearance and cheerfulness, and this continued for a long time; but, after rising from sleep one morning, he said he had seen his father that night in his sleep, who seemed angry with him, calling him an idler, asking him what he was doing there, and telling him to go back and go to work again. He now seemed cheerful, and possessed again his former pleasing appearance. Telling us, the family, to remain, and do the work as we had done, he started back in a few days to this country, *i. e.* Whitewater.

One little circumstance I must here be permitted to relate, to show the character of the Indians. I was travelling about eighteen miles from home, after salt for our stock, and on my way back, I met a company of about twenty Indians. In the front of the gang there was one who seemed to recognize me with surprise, and wished to inquire—to whom, however, I paid no attention. He got down, took hold of my left foot, drawing off my shoe and sock, and then embracing me most tenderly, called aloud, “Wineberger.” At this an old Indian came up,

whom I had known all my life. His name was Bear Head. Looking at my foot, he seized me and took me in his embrace. Then came an old woman, his sister, whose name was Sally. She was overjoyed at meeting me. They told me that they knew me certainly by my having two toes grown together on that foot, which they had often seen when they ate, and drank milk at our house. We all sat down together on the ground, and they commenced asking me with regard to my parents, whom they styled great friends. After remaining with these red children about three hours, we parted. I could not but wish that they might go to the place where good people go.

As it regards the former enterprise, it was found not to work well. After losing all our property by a freshet, we returned to Whitewater poorer than we left it. The settlements had been much enlarged. There was a church erected on Wolf Creek, which united the two first-named places of preaching. Twenty miles south of this, at John Hahn's, was this second place; twenty miles southwest of this, at Philip and Dewalt Bollinger's, the third; twelve miles northwest of this, at the widow Widener's, on Castor Creek, his fourth; twenty miles northwest of this, at Peter Grounds', on Whitewater, his fifth place. The country was then in a flourishing condition; everything was found in abundance.

While in our wilderness home, we were visited by the following ministers, viz., the Revs. Shoenberger, Hilligas, and Hiestand — at different times

by the latter. Each of these, in company with father, preached round at the different preaching places, and were well pleased. He, my father, was often visited by Baptist preachers, who seemed to be on the best of terms with him.

In 1820 there came to this country a preacher from North Carolina, whose name I do not remember. He said he was a Hinkelite Lutheran. He did not visit us, but acted as the Methodists and Presbyterians did afterwards. He appointed meetings in father's places, when father did not occupy them. The plea was to have more preaching. He was listened to and praised by the dissatisfied and nothingists—the latter a name we had for those who belonged to no Church. At the meeting-house on Wolf Creek, this did not work well, but created a division. The house not standing in the centre of the community, it was left to a vote whether to continue in the old one, or build a new house more in the centre. The latter course was adopted by a large majority. The new house was built three miles north of the first-named, and was called the “new” meeting-house. It is now occupied by us; the other one is gone, *i. e.* destroyed; the place where it stood is an enclosed and cultivated field.

In 1823 the churches numbered about as follows: members, 150; baptisms to this date, 1000; marriages, 100; funeral sermons, 60.

Father had not visited Synod since his residence in Louisiana Territory, now the State of Missouri. When asked the reason why he did not do so, his

answer was that it required more money to travel eight hundred miles or more, to Synod, than he or his people had to spare; and he further remarked that he had now, in 1823, mail conveniences, and was in communication with his own Church, receiving the Minutes of their proceedings, with which he was well pleased.

About this time he commenced visiting Southern Illinois, where a considerable number of American settlements had been made. Among these were a portion of his former acquaintances from North Carolina. These were settled in Union County, near the town of Jonesboro'. By giving them a part of his time every year, he was enabled to build up a church of some thirty members in that vicinity, as early as 1824. These good people often assisted us with their charities in things needful. My father's labors were divided, at this date, about as follows: At the new meeting-house, he preached the first Sunday in the month; twenty miles south of this, on Crooked Creek, the second Sunday; twenty miles west, on Castor Creek, the third; and twenty miles north, on Big Whitewater, the fourth Sunday. These places received his steady attention, except one month in each year, which was given to the Church in Illinois. Every fifth Sunday that came in the month was given to distant settlements. The services were performed in German or English, according to the wish of the majority of the people at the different places.

It may truly be said that he *lived* among his people indeed; for, unless prevented by school-teach-

ing, which was seldom the case, he started from home on Monday, on his way to his next appointment, intending to stop at every house on the way, just so as to arrive in time for the meeting. From thence to the next place, and so on; so that his absence from home was often four weeks. My mother often requested him to remain more at home. His answer was, that it was impossible to cultivate such a large field properly, without being among the people much and conversing with them often. He loved to do good, and was equally beloved by his people, and by all around who knew him. His young catechumens often requested him to shorten their course of instruction. He answered them that the Christian religion was productive of the most good, as well as being the most durable, where the most Christian knowledge was possessed. He further remarked that the Heidelberg Catechism was full short enough.

In 1826, the character of his people was good; they were faithful, church-going, and punctual in paying their debts and fulfilling their promises. If one loaned money, there was seldom a note given, or interest charged. Lawsuits were a strange thing among us. Thus the people lived in a happy state, and made all happy around them.

In 1826 there were added to the Church, at the new meeting-house, of the catechumens some twenty-four members. In the same year there were added to the Crooked Creek church, of the catechumens, twenty-two members. These, added to their former number, made them appear prosperous

and respectable. At this place the Methodists exerted themselves to their utmost to get a hold; but failed. In 1830, the Presbyterians, with two missionaries, and two preachers who lived at some distance, came in on all the ground occupied by father on Whitewater, in the vicinity of the new meeting-house. They made slow progress, as they were sustained by only a few besides the "nothingists."

In 1833, the cholera made its appearance in this part of the world for the first time. On the 1st of June, it reached this neighborhood; and so fatal was it, that in a few days twenty persons died. Father shrunk not in the presence of this new and terrible disease, but went from house to house, visiting the bedside of the sick and dying; and, when dead, preaching their funeral sermons, and following many to their graves, to perform the rites of burial, and show the last sad mark of respect to their memory. In these attentions he continued day and night until the 17th of June, when, worn down with fatigue, and his strength exhausted, he came home to enjoy some rest. On the following morning, at nine o'clock, he was attacked with the same dreadful complaint, and, after nine hours' continuance, he expired June 18th, 1833. Two days afterwards my mother followed him to the spirit world. The good Samaritan was with us no more. By the 1st of July the cholera had abated, and by the 10th it was entirely gone.

My father's age was 59 years, 8 months, and 29 days. His health was yet good, and he was en-



gaged in the active duties of his ministry up to the day of his death. When young, his weight was 140 pounds; at the age of 45, 180 pounds; and at 55, 200 pounds.

As regards his character, he was genial, mild, and kind in his disposition; gentlemanly in his conduct towards all; and, as husband, father, and pastor, faithful and true. He paid great attention to his church. If one of his members acted so as to create doubts, he immediately visited him. On one occasion, he remarked to one who had been more ungovernable than he ought to have been: "How can you, with a family in your charge, live so thoughtless in a world filled with all good gifts, the proper use of which you find constitutes your happiness, knowing that you, with them, were created to glorify God; how, in these circumstances, can you fail to give Him praise and thanks for the same?" Those who went astray were generally won back. His natural endowments were of the first order; to these he added thoroughness of scholarship, as his writings show. He has left several fugitive pieces and a journal of his ministry, besides two books in manuscript on the two covenants—the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace.

Here is one piece from his sketch-book, which he addressed to a young preacher named Ephraim Conrad, who had also taken lessons from him in theology. It was on a certain occasion, after this young man had preached a sermon, that he addressed him as follows:

“My friend: You told us this day of all the sins we ever committed. But you will let it be remembered that severe sermons, delivered by young preachers, often tend to irritate the audience more than to edify them. Sermons delivered in the spirit of love gain the affections of the auditors, whilst those of an austere nature excite their indignation, as they seldom fail to bring an occasion of reviling. Some of the hearers, taking the first opportunity, will enumerate, without mercy, all the inadvertencies the preacher had ever committed, and congratulate themselves that they now have it in their power to retail in order the past sins of the preacher as he, in order, retailed theirs. The failings of good men are the pool in which the leprous wash themselves clean; yea, their hobby on which they ride to the devil. Remember, therefore, the good Samaritan, and try to imitate him.”

My father and mother lie buried side by side, on the top of a hill, in what is called the burying-ground of the first settlers, about one mile and a half from the new meeting-house.

In 1835, some of the people wrote to North Carolina for a minister; but got no assistance. In eight years it became painfully evident how matters were going; for when the heads of families died off, those occupying their places were only baptized when young, receiving no further ministerial care, and, in consequence, were unable to stem the tide that was making against them. All now began to feel the want of a pastor. In 1841 they once more wrote to North Carolina; but again failed, or only

received promises; and were informed that their first letter must have been wrongly directed, and was never received.

About this time I became acquainted with David M. Livers, a member of our Church, who advised me to make known our condition and wants in the German Reformed Messenger. This being done, we have had more or less preaching for the last seven years. And, although the ministers found the people measurably grown up without Christian knowledge, they have succeeded in adding about seventy-five members; the minister has also administered about the same number of baptisms.

This is according to the truth, so far as the record shows and my memory extends.

## REV. WILLIAM HENDEL, D. D.

1768 — 1846.

MR. HENDEL was the eldest son of the venerable Dr. Hendel, a sketch of whose life will be found elsewhere in this Work. He was born Oct. 14th, 1768. His father made early provision for the education of his son, and accordingly sent him, in the twelfth year of his age, to Philadelphia, where he commenced his academical studies under the direction of Drs. Kuntze and Helmuth, of the Lutheran Church. After he had finished his preparatory studies, he entered Columbia College in New York, where he passed through a regular collegiate course.

After he had graduated, he entered the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, in New Jersey, and pursued his theological course under the direction of the Rev. Drs. Gross and Livingston; from which institution he also received the degree of Doctor of Divinity at a later period of his life, about the year 1828. He often spoke with feelings of the deepest gratitude of the great kindness manifested towards him by his beloved father, in giving him a thorough classical and theological education. On the 17th of Oct., 1792, he was examined by a committee of Synod; and on the 30th of April, 1793,

he was ordained to the holy ministry by Synod at its meeting in Lancaster.

At the time of his licensure he received calls from several pastoral charges; among others was one from New York to become assistant to Dr. Gross, which was urged upon his earnest consideration by Mr. Gross himself. After much earnest and careful consideration, he deemed it his duty to accept of the one from Tulpehocken.

On the 11th of Oct., 1793, he preached his introductory sermon in the Tulpehocken church, and soon afterwards also in the several congregations associated with it in that pastoral charge. Here, during a period of over twenty-nine years, he experienced joy and sorrow; passed through seasons of sunshine and storm, and saw good and evil days. During the latter portion of his ministry here, especially, many opposed him violently and persecuted him in a most unrighteous manner; and this, with few exceptions, simply because he took a deep interest in missions and in the establishment of a Theological Seminary. Instead of allowing this opposition to dampen his ardor or lessen his interest in such benevolent enterprises, and check his activity in the work of the Lord, he concluded to resign his charge of the Tulpehocken and Millbach congregations, under the conviction that it was his duty to serve God rather than man.

Accordingly, in April, 1823, he preached his farewell sermons to these congregations, choosing rather to leave the ground than sacrifice his convictions of duty to abate the opposition of his enemies. He

removed from Tulpehocken to Womelsdorf, where he continued six years longer to preach to several congregations. At the close of this latter period, his bodily infirmities had so much increased that he was obliged to resign the charge of these congregations also, and retire from labor. He, however, continued to preach occasionally for his brethren in the neighborhood, and also on funeral occasions, until eventually his greatly increased infirmities warned him to lay his shepherd's staff entirely aside.

Dr. Hendel was married to Miss Hahn, of Falconer Swamp. He left no descendants. She preceded him to eternity some years.

Dr. Hendel generally enjoyed good health; but, as already intimated, this began to fail him in the last years of his life, having been attacked with a disease of apoplectic nature which changed by degrees into dropsy. His sufferings were not only protracted, but also great and exceedingly distressing, especially during the last seven years of his life. He, however, bore up under his sufferings with great patience and humble submission to the will of God. His Redeemer was to him all in all. He was frequently visited by his neighboring ministerial brethren, whose words and prayers greatly consoled his last days.

Dr. Hendel died at his residence in Womelsdorf, Berks County, Pa., on Saturday, July 11th, 1846, after an illness of about five years. His age was 77 years, 8 months, and 27 days. On Tuesday, the 14th, he was buried in the Womelsdorf cemetery, by the side of his wife. A large concourse of people

followed his remains to the grave. The Rev. Mr. Ulrich, of the Lutheran Church, made a brief address and offered prayer at the house; Rev. T. H. Leinbach preached a sermon in the church, on Dan. xii. 3, in the German language, and Rev. J. C. Bucher followed in English in a discourse on Ps. xci. 16. The closing prayer was offered by Rev. Henry Wagner, after which the solemn crowd dispersed.

Mr. Hendel's labors for many years extended over a large field, embracing often ten or more congregations. In addition to this, he frequently visited vacant congregations, to preach for them and administer the holy sacraments. On one occasion, while on a ministerial visit to Lykens Valley, he baptized twenty-five children at one time in Hoffman's church.

He was a regular attendant upon the ecclesiastical assemblies of the Church, and was a very useful and influential member of Synod at its meetings. He was a warm friend of the literary and theological institutions of the Church; not only giving his labor and influence for their establishment, but contributing more than \$1000 from his own private funds towards their permanent endowment. It is said by Father Gerhart, who was present, that when, during the meeting of Synod at Bedford in 1824, the question on the establishment of a Theological Seminary was taken, the vote was a tie. Dr. Hendel, who was president, rose and with much feeling and emphasis gave the casting vote, saying: "I vote for the Seminary;"<sup>1</sup> and, in allusion to the prevailing

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<sup>1</sup> See New End. Scheme, by Rev. Prof. E. V. Gerhart, page 13.

opposition to the Seminary, added: "I have broad shoulders, and can carry much." Even in the last years of his life, when laden down by age and infirmities, he always heard with gratitude, and often literally with tears of joy, any good tidings that came to him concerning the institutions of the Church. His heart was full of these things, and it was his delight to speak of them to all who visited him while waiting in the evening twilight of his life for the chariots of Israel.

We would no doubt be accused of suppressing important facts, and even of going counter to the venerable man's express request, did we omit reference to what is called an "Extraordinary Confession," made by him a few years before his death. It is related thus in his obituary:<sup>1</sup> "Agreeable to his particular request, it becomes my painful duty also to advert to the shady side of his personal history. In 1842 he caused brother Bucher, of Reading, to be sent for, and made to him, as he lay upon his couch, an extraordinary confession: 'Is it possible,' said he, 'that there is yet mercy for so great a sinner as I am? I am even a greater sinner than was Saul of Tarsus.' Such a confession astonished brother B., who proposed to him a number of questions. He, however, continued, and said: 'I have indeed had the theory of the Christian religion, but have never personally experienced the saving power of the gospel, which I for so many years preached to others. In my youth, I had good intentions and lived near to the Saviour; but, alas! I went back

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<sup>1</sup> See Ger. Ref. Mess., July 29, 1846.



from Him, and so far strayed as to indulge for some time in gross vices, and probably many souls have been lost through my errors.' Mr. B. conversed with him for about three hours, when at length he obtained a comfortable sense of the pardon of his sins, and joyfully acknowledged, 'I have now, for the first time, become savingly acquainted with my Saviour; now I live in Him.' He requested Mr. B. to make known his confession as a warning to his ministerial brethren, inasmuch as by this means perhaps souls may be rescued from ruin. He directed also that his confession should be made known at his funeral to his former congregations, so that they may not, as he had done, put off their repentance until their last hours; and this direction was complied with."

We make no comments on this incident, but leave the reader to make up his own mind in regard to it. We will only add that it was published in handbill form, after his death, under the auspices of some members of the "Evangelical Association," and used as an argument against that Church in which Dr. Hendel lived, labored, and died, and in favor of certain views entertained in that body in regard to conversion!

Dr. Hendel was a deep and earnest thinker. He was not particularly distinguished as a popular preacher, but, like his father, had a wonderful gift of prayer. His prayers were fluent, full of unction, and peculiarly impressive. Those who knew him say that, if you heard him preach and then heard him pray, you could scarcely believe that it was the same

man. It is said that a Mr. John Conrad Walter, a shoemaker in Tulpehocken, was so drawn to the Saviour, and so impressed under one of Dr. Hendel's prayers, that he afterwards had no peace until he devoted himself to the ministry. Being a Lutheran, he became a minister in that Church, and was located for some time in Middleburg, now Snyder County, Pa., where he died about 1820. He afterwards called to see Dr. Hendel, when passing through Womelsdorf, and gratefully informed him of the circumstance.

REV. CHRISTIAN LUDWIG BECKER,  
D. D.

1756 — 1818.

THIS eminent servant of Jesus Christ was born in Anhalt-Cœthen, Germany, Nov. 17th, 1756. His parents were Carl Gottfried Becker and Johanna Elizabeth, his wife, whose maiden name was Hane. His father died when he was only seven years old; and his education, at this tender age, devolved upon his mother, a most excellent and truly pious woman, in all respects worthy of being intrusted with such a charge.

At an early age his mother sent him to one of the best seminaries in the region of his home, where he enjoyed, for the space of ten years, the instructions of Professors Luedike, Lange, and others, in Latin and Greek, and other branches of science. Having naturally an active mind and a love for knowledge, he made rapid progress.

At the age of eighteen he entered the University of Halle, at that time under the presidency of Dr. Gruner. Here, for four years, he attended the lectures of the following learned professors: In mathematics and mental philosophy, Drs. Eberhard and Meyer; in dogmatical theology and moral philoso-

phy, the celebrated Dr. Mursinna; in exegesis of the Old and New Testaments, Drs. Noeselt and Knapp; and in ecclesiastical and political history, Drs. Semler and Thuneman.

After finishing the course of study at Halle, he went to Bremen, where he spent fourteen years as *Candidatus Theologiæ*; during which time he pursued his studies with the utmost diligence, occasionally preaching for the pastors of that city with great acceptance, and devoting part of his time in the education of young men preparatory to entering the universities. While at Bremen, he also published several works — one an exposition of the 53d chapter of Isaiah, and the other a treatise on the best mode of converting the Jews; both of which are said to manifest much theological learning and very extensive acquaintance with general literature. Afterwards he also published two volumes of sermons, while yet in Europe.

On the 10th of Nov., 1788, in the thirty-second year of his age, he was united in holy matrimony with Miss Adelheit, daughter of William Ahlers, of Bremen.

He continued to reside in Bremen till 1793, when he embarked for America, bearing with him the most flattering testimonials of his learning and piety, and the blessing and prayers of the ministerium of Bremen.

Having arrived safely at Baltimore, in July or August, 1793, through the kind interest of the Rev. George Trolldenier, then pastor of the German Reformed church on Second Street, in that city, he im-

mediately received a call from the united congregations of Easton, Mount Bethel, Plainfield, and Dryland, in Northampton County, Pa., which he accepted, and accordingly entered upon his duties there in the latter part of the same year.

On the 18th of May, 1794, he presented himself before Synod in Reading, making application to be regularly received as a member of that body, and placed formally over the congregations which he had served since his arrival from Germany. He was received as a candidate for the ministry, and a *tentamen* was directed to be held with him. Instead of this, however, Synod only required him to preach a sermon, which he did from John xvi. 13. This having been satisfactory to Synod, Revs. Blumer, Helfrich, and Wack were appointed to ordain him in his own congregation.<sup>1</sup>

He remained pastor of this charge about eighteen months, much beloved by his people, when he received a call from the congregation in Lancaster, Pa., which, after much reflection and considerable reluctance, he at length accepted. He removed to Lancaster, March, 1795. He labored with much acceptance and success in his new charge till June, 1806, eleven years. There are still some aged members in that congregation who remember his extraordinary eloquence, and who kindle up with delight at the mention of his name.

As early as 1801, after the death of his bosom friend, Trolldenier, a call was presented to him from the congregation in Baltimore, which, however, he

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Synod, 1794.

at length declined. As reluctant as he was at first to come to Lancaster, so unwilling was he now to leave. In 1806, the congregation in Baltimore again became vacant, and the call to Dr. Becker was renewed, and once more earnestly urged upon him, which finally proved successful in drawing him away from Lancaster. Nothing can better illustrate the deep hold he had upon the affections of the people whom he was now to leave, than the fact that his removal bore strong resemblance to a funeral procession. A long train of carriages, and persons on horseback, accompanied him on his way as far as Columbia, ten miles; and the whole scene seemed like that of old when "devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made a great lamentation over him." It was a spontaneous demonstration of the sincerest affection. They were losing a faithful, learned, and eloquent pastor; and this was cause sufficient for tears.

He entered upon his duties as pastor, in Baltimore, about the first of July, 1806, and continued there up to the time of his death. Besides attending to the more immediate interests of his congregation, both in Lancaster and Baltimore, Dr. Becker manifested a more general zeal for the spread of the Church in preparing a number of young men for the ministry. Some twelve or fourteen in all were by him prepared for the holy office; some of whom were at an earlier day, and some still are, among the most devoted and successful pastors of the Church. While in Baltimore, in 1810, he also published a volume of fourteen ser-

mons. This volume is still to be found in some old families of the Church, and is deservedly much valued. We have also in our possession two singly printed sermons. One is, "Die Religion Jesu eine Sanfte Religion," preached at the consecration of the German Reformed church in Lebanon, May 8th, 1796. The other, "Die Letzte Bitte eines Christlichen Predigers an Seine Gemeinde," being his farewell sermon to the congregation in Lancaster, July, 1806.

Silently and steadily the time drew on when Dr. Becker was to be "gathered to his fathers." Though he was sick for some time, he died somewhat suddenly, July 12th, 1818, "fully assured of his interest in the Saviour of the world." "The pulpit and minister's chair were hung in black, and the whole congregation went into deep mourning for their esteemed pastor." He was buried, on the day following his death, in the Western cemetery, belonging to the Second Street church. Dr. Kurtz and Rev. Snyder officiated on the solemn occasion.

Often have we heard aged persons, who were present, describe the awfully sublime meteorological phenomena which characterized the day of his burial. "At the hour of his funeral, the heavens were clothed with blackness; the forked lightnings sent forth fearful gleams; the hoarse thunder shook the very foundations of the place where the mourners and friends were assembled; and so agitated were the elements, and so terrible the storm of rain and wind, that many were led to fear for their personal safety. Towards evening, however, the fury

of the storm abated, and the congregation followed their lamented pastor to the tomb. On the following Sabbath, the Rev. Dr. Kurtz delivered in the church a very appropriate funeral discourse.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Becker possessed naturally a very strong mind, which had early been brought under strict scientific discipline, so that he thought logically on any subject he took in hand. Though he wrote much, yet in his teaching and preaching he was ready and free in his communications. Though trained to logical acuteness, he was neither stiff nor cold. His heart reigned in his mind. He was ardent and impulsive in his temperament; and in preaching was frequently “caught up” into a most overwhelming flow of impassioned eloquence and tender feeling. He would at times sway a congregation as the wind moves a forest of pines, so that the stoutest would bend to the power that breathed upon them.

With all his ardor and fire of temperament, he was a man of much mildness, and loved the ways of peace. He seems to have been averse to religious controversy, and possessed much charity towards those who belonged to other Christian communions. We have been informed by aged persons who were catechized and confirmed by him, that he never explained the eightieth question in the Catechism. He never gave any reason for this; it may have been because it was not contained in the original copy as drawn up by Ursinus and Olevianus; or perhaps more likely because of its sharp and severe polemical spirit, differing so entirely from the sweet, pa-

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<sup>1</sup> Centenary Sermon by Dr. Heiner, 1850, p. 32.



cific spirit which characterizes the symbol as a whole.

The late venerable Jacob Christian Becker, D.D., of Bethlehem, Pa., for many years pastor of an extensive charge in that region, who died on Wednesday afternoon, August 18th, 1858, was his only son, and had, in a very large measure, inherited his father's talent and eloquence.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A Memoir of him will be given in Vol. IV. of this Work.

## REV. JOHN GOBRECHT.

1773 — 1830.

THE subject of this notice, son of Rev. John Christopher Gobrecht, was born in Lancaster County, Pa., December the 10th, 1773, his father at that time being pastor of the following congregations: Cocalico, Modecreek, Zeltenreich, and Reicher's church. He was baptized, on the 30th of the same month, by the Rev. Mr. Faber, the Rev. Dr. Hendel and his wife being the sponsors.

As a child, his parents brought him to Hanover, York County, where his father took charge of some congregations in 1779. Here he grew up under the Christian nurture of his father's family, and became a youth inclined to piety, and having a strong thirst for knowledge. Rev. Mr. Melsheimer, a Lutheran minister, and a man of considerable classical attainments, at that time taught in that place the languages and other branches of learning, under whose care young Gobrecht was placed, to pass through the necessary studies preparatory to the study of theology.

Having been thus suitably prepared, he was sent to Lancaster to study theology under his sponsor, the Rev. Dr. Hendel. He was also some time

under the instruction of the Rev. Mr. Stoeck, of Shippensburg. At the meeting of Synod at Lancaster, in May, 1794, he presented himself for examination, in which he rendered full satisfaction. His father stated "that his son had not received a call, but that his congregations had urged him to receive him as an assistant; which arrangement was approved by the Synod; and for certain reasons it was resolved to ordain him to the ministry."<sup>1</sup> He continued for several years as his father's assistant.

In 1801, he received a call from the united congregations at Jacob's, Codorus, David's, Zion's, and Gettysburg, which was laid before Synod. "It was resolved, that it be left to Mr. Gobrecht to accept the call, after mature consideration in the fear of God, with special reference to his relations to his father." It seems, however, that this call was afterwards declined, since we find that the following year, 1802, he was already located in Lehigh County, living in North White Hall Township, and serving the congregations at Allentown, Egypt, Jordan, and Union.

His residence was near the Egypt church, on a farm. His house was beautifully situated near a quiet woods, in the peaceful shades of which, during the summer months, he was accustomed to spend most of his leisure time in study and meditation, finding this retreat better adapted to such a purpose than the circumstances described by Solomon in Proverbs xxi. 9-19, to which the curious reader may refer. He is said to have been a quiet and

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, 1794.

peaceable man, possessing more than ordinary talents, and being much given to study.

He served these congregations faithfully, and with much favor among the people of his charge, for the space of thirty years, and died in the thirty-seventh year of his ministry, and in the fifty-eighth year of his age, March 5th, 1831. His remains lie entombed in the graveyard of the Egypt church, where a marble slab marks his resting-place. The inscription on his tombstone is as follows:

In Memory of

REV. JOHN GOBRECHT.

He was born Dec. 10th, 1773, in Lancaster County, Pa. Studied Theology with Revs. Melsheimer, Stoeck, and Hendel, and was ordained to the office of the Ministry, in 1794, by the Reverend Reformed Synod, and served in the Evangelical Ministry with persevering faithfulness 37 years. He was married the first time to Hannah Traxel; lived with her in matrimony 15 years and 19 days: they were blest with 8 children. Was married the second time to widow Hall, with whom he lived 9 years and 5 months, and had 2 children. To the deep sorrow of his family and his congregations, the Lord of life and death called this true and noble man into the better world, aged 57 years, 2 months less 5 days.

Wohl dir, O Christ, nach kurtzem Leiden  
 Ruft dir des Heilands Stimme zu,  
 Geh' ein zu deines Gottes Freuden,  
 Nach Müh' und Kampf zur ewigen Ruh'.  
 Komm und empfang vor Seinem Thron  
 Der Ueberwinder grossen Lohn.

## REV. GEORGE GEISTWEIT.

1761 — 1831.

REV. GEORGE GEISTWEIT was born in the year of our Lord 1761. He was an American by birth; but the exact place of his nativity we have not been able to ascertain, nor have we any reliable sources from which to construct an account of his early life or of his preparation for the office and work of the holy ministry. At the meeting of Synod held at Reading in May, 1794, Mr. Geistweit, with several others, was examined; and the committee having "found the several candidates were qualified for the duties of the ministry," they were accordingly licensed. At the same meeting, we are told in the Minutes, "a call was read from Shamokin to Mr. Geistweit," whereupon Synod "permitted him to accept the call from Sunbury, Middle Creek, Bauerman's and Dupson's congregations." The congregations in all that region had been vacant since Rev. J. Rahauser left them, in 1792, whose successor Mr. Geistweit became. He preached also at Selin's Grove, Buffalo Valley, in Bowler Township, at the Penn's creek, in the newly-built town of "Berlin," besides other places in that West and North Branch region, where as yet no churches had been built. There are still some persons living

in that part of the country who were confirmed and married by him, who recollect his ministry, and speak of him with great affection and gratitude.

Mr. Geistweit labored in this widely scattered charge of infant congregations till May, 1804 — a space of about ten years — when he received and accepted a call to become the successor of the Rev. D. Wagner, in the congregation of York, Pa. He labored in York till Whitsuntide, 1820, when he was compelled, by failing health, to resign his charge, and retire from the regular duties of the ministry. He lived, however, about eleven years longer, and died in peace, Nov. 11th, 1831, in the seventieth year of his age.

After he had been compelled by infirmity to withdraw from the ministry, he continued to be highly respected and beloved in the community where he had labored, and still continued to preach, as opportunity was afforded and strength allowed, to some congregations in the country.

On the occasion of his funeral, as an evidence of the respect in which he was held, an immense concourse of people gathered around his remains, to show this last token of respect to their aged and beloved pastor. He was buried in the German Reformed graveyard in York, Pa.

Mr. Geistweit was married to a sister of the Revs. Rahauser. She has the reputation of having been a most excellent woman. Some descendants of the family are still residing in York, Pa.

During his ministry at York the congregation enjoyed peace and quiet prosperity. He was a

peace-loving and peace-making man; always mild, kind, and amiable. He had less fire to consume the wood, hay, and stubble than he had love to warm the graces of the Spirit into life and beauty. He was not so much a "son of thunder" as a "son of consolation." He did his work well, and has left a pleasant savor behind him in the memories of many, and rests from his toil in the bosom of his God.

NOTE.—Mr. Geistweit bears the enviable reputation of having been one of the kindest and most benevolent of men. It is reported of him that, on one occasion, he even took the hat from his own head and gave it to a poor wanderer whose destitute condition appealed to his charity.

This excellent quality, by which he was so signally conformed to the amiable character of his divine Lord and Master, has embalmed his memory in the hearts of many of those who once enjoyed the benefits of his presence and of his labors, and still experience in their hearts and manifest in their lives the fruits of his faithful, loving, and efficient ministry.—D. Y. H.

## REV. JOHN HENRY HOFFMEIER.

1760 — 1838.

AMONG the earlier ministers of the German Reformed Church, who renounced all the tempting prospects of a less onerous and more comfortable sphere of pastoral activity in their native land, and devoted themselves with great Christian courage and self-denial to the establishment and spread of the gospel in the New World, the subject of this sketch merits a prominent place.<sup>1</sup> He was born in Anhalt-Cöthen, in Germany, on the 17th of March, 1760, the youngest of several brothers. His parents occupied a respectable position in society; but are chiefly worthy of praise for their sincere piety and devoted attachment to the great principles of the German Reformed Church. On the third day after his birth, he was incorporated with the Church by holy baptism. As a child, he enjoyed all the advantages of a pious training in a family in which a living Christianity predominated; and he was thus brought up “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

Severe chastening dispensations with which his father's house was visited exerted a sanctifying in-

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by his grandson, the Rev. Dr. Bomberger.



fluence upon him. One after another his brothers had fallen victims, at a certain age, to a fatal disease, which seems to have made this family its mark. He only was left to solace the hearts of his deeply afflicted parents. But on arriving at the same age at which his brothers had died, he, too, was seized with the same fatal malady. Now, thought he, I also shall die, and lie in the cold grave beside my buried brothers. The occasion deeply impressed his mind. Who shall tell what fervent prayers arose from his youthful heart, beseeching the Lord, for his afflicted parents' sake, that the life of their only surviving son might be spared to them? And who shall describe with what anguish of soul, and unutterable groanings, those pious, heart-stricken parents besought the Lord to spare them this last and heaviest blow?

This sickness occurred about the fourteenth year of young Hoffmeier's age. To this dispensation, we may probably date the origin of his purpose to devote himself to the Christian ministry. The fervent prayers for his recovery were heard. His health and strength returned. Soon afterwards he solemnly assumed the consecration of himself to the Lord in baptism, and was admitted to full membership in the Church by the solemn rite of confirmation.

About this time those parents who had so fervently desired the life of their child, were themselves snatched away by death; and the lad was cast out upon the world a desolate orphan, without parents, without brothers or sisters to sympathize

with him, and apparently without any friends willing, in a measure, to supply the parents' place. A kind Providence, however, opened a refuge for him in the Orphans' Asylum in Halle, that glorious monument of the benevolence, the piety, and heroic faith of Franke. Here his general conduct and diligence in his studies won for him the confidence and esteem of his superiors. He was encouraged in his purpose to devote himself to the ministry, and passed through the studies preparatory to his entering upon a theological course.

His preparatory work having been completed, he was transferred, in 1779, to the theological department of the Frederick College, in Halle. Here he remained three years, at the end of which term he obtained his theological diploma. Immediately after finishing his theological course, he went to Hamburg, and engaged as a tutor in private families, being especially desirous of prosecuting his studies privately before assuming active ministerial duties. But the harsh climate of Hamburg disagreed with his feeble health, and, by the advice of a physician, he went to Bremen, where he commenced preaching in the capacity of a candidate. It was here that he first definitely formed the resolution to go to America. Long before, he had heard reports of the spiritual destitution of this country, which had at times produced deep impressions on his mind, and excited a desire to devote himself to their supply. Meanwhile, however, other thoughts and cares had crowded out his earlier sympathies with the Church in the New World. In Bremen

those sympathies were revived. The frequent return of ships from America kept the subject constantly before his mind, and ever brought new and more animating and touching accounts of the spiritual wants of his German brethren in their distant home.

In the midst of the thoughts and yearnings thus awakened, he was one night visited by a dream, the vividness of which seemed almost to characterize it as a vision. The dream at the same time indicates what was the burden of his waking thoughts. In this dream he thought he had made a voyage to America; and, after a short journey inland, saw a house of certain dimensions, structure, and surroundings, in which he took up his abode. This dream naturally prepared his mind for the immediate occasion of his coming to this country, which was now at hand.

An intimate ministerial friend of Mr. Hoffmeier about that time received a letter from an acquaintance in America, urging him to come over to this country and aid in relieving its lamentable spiritual destitutions, which were most touchingly described. That letter was shown to Mr. Hoffmeier. Its contents deeply affected him. When asked whether he would not respond to its call, he replied: "Yes, I will go; I regard that letter as addressed to myself."

He now began in earnest to prepare for his long journey; among other things very prudently providing himself with a wife. During his residence in Bremen, he had formed the acquaintance of a

devotedly pious, intelligent, and estimable young woman, Gertrude von Asen. The acquaintance grew into a warm, mutual attachment. This Christian lady resolved to share with the young minister the trials and toils which might be incident to the new and arduous field of labor he had felt himself constrained to choose. Whatever sacrifices of a comfortable home, and high social position in her native place it might cost her, she was enabled, by grace, to resolve to make them. They were united in holy wedlock on the 8th day of May, 1793. On the next day they set sail for America.

It may be allowed, in this place, to pay a passing tribute to the superior worth of this excellent woman. Passing by in silence her more personal good qualities, she deserves high praise as the model of a pastor's wife. She most strictly and conscientiously confined herself to that more retired but influential sphere of usefulness, the family of her husband. She was a woman of remarkable Christian prudence and patience. This, combined with her intelligence, eminently qualified her to be the helpmeet of her husband. Among those who could appreciate merit in spite of the disadvantages of a language and of manners, which ignorant pride led many in years past to despise, she was universally respected and esteemed. Her kindness, her gentleness, her unaffected piety, shed lustre upon her position, and served to sustain her husband in all his official relations. Her prudence and patience, and her skill in cheering her partner amid the sorest trials through which an aged min-

ister can pass, were put to the severest test during the last years of her life. But whatever else may have failed her, the graces of Christian patience and meekness endured the fires unscathed.

The voyage of the young missionary and his wife seems to have been a remarkably short and pleasant one. To cheer them under the trials of leaving home and their native land, as they truly supposed forever, they had the company of another party who had embarked on the same holy errand; these were the Rev. Dr. C. L. Becker and his wife. They reached Baltimore some time in July.

Soon after his arrival in America, his attention was directed by some ministers of the Reformed Church to a vacant field of labor in Northampton County, Pa., to which they also gave him recommendations. He immediately set out, with his companion, for this field, locating in Hellertown, in the southwest section of the county. A circumstance connected with their arrival in Hellertown strangely conspired to confirm Mr. Hoffmeier's belief in the prophetic significance of his earlier dream. They had hardly entered the village, when his wife's attention was attracted by the comfortable appearance of a two-story stone building on the right of the way. Immediately opposite to this stood another two-story house, of frame-work, very comfortable in its appearance, though of humbler pretensions. "There," said the young wife, "I would be content to live." This remark led her husband to look at it, when he immediately exclaimed, "That is the house I saw in my dream." The house was afterwards purchased

by the neighboring congregations as a parsonage, and occupied by Mr. Hoffmeier during the entire period of his residence in Saucon.

On the 18th of May in the following year, 1794, the Synod of the German Reformed Church convened in Reading, when Mr. Hoffmeier presented himself for examination and ordination. He sustained a creditable examination, was regularly received and ordained, on the 21st of May, as pastor of the charge to which he had been so providentially led. The congregations composing that charge were Upper Saucon, about ten miles from Hellertown; Lower Saucon, immediately at his place of residence; Springfield, about six miles south of Hellertown; and Hamilton, which was upwards of twenty miles distant, and beyond the Blue Mountain, as the North Mountain is there designated. It was a most laborious field, but he found in it the very opportunity of doing good which he had sought. His labors there were most encouragingly successful under the divine blessing; and although half a century has elapsed since he quit that field, there are a few old members of those churches still left, from whose minds the impressions made by the fervor of his appeals, especially in the catechetical class, on sacramental and on funeral occasions, have not yet been effaced. The contemporaries of Mr. Hoffmeier in this general field of labor were Dr. C. L. Becker, Rev. T. Pomp, and Rev. J. Gobrecht, of the Reformed Church, and the Rev. Mr. Endress, afterwards of Lancaster, of the Lutheran Church. With Mr. Pomp and Mr. Endress, he was on terms of

special intimacy, frequently preaching for them in Easton. A funeral sermon preached on one occasion in Easton created quite a sensation in his favor, and is spoken of by a few surviving hearers of it to this day.

In the spring of 1806, Mr. Hoffmeier received an invitation to visit the congregation in Baltimore, then vacant. In compliance with this invitation, he went, and preached several times in that city, and with great acceptance. The visit would in all probability have resulted in a call; but on his way back from Baltimore, he stopped with his former fellow-voyager, Dr. C. L. Becker, and was led, through representations of difficulties existing in the Baltimore church, to decline all further negotiations with regard to his going there.

It seemed, however, as though his labors in Saucon were to come to an end. A few months after his return home, he received a call from the German Reformed congregation in Lancaster, rendered vacant by the removal of Dr. Becker to Baltimore. He had several times previously preached in Lancaster, and made so favorable an impression, that they extended this call to him without requiring a trial visit. He felt it to be his duty to accept of this call, although it was with great reluctance that he consented to break the strong tie which bound him during so many pleasant years to the people of the Saucon charge. For the people also, who fully reciprocated his attachment, the prospective separation was exceedingly painful. But a sense of duty prevailed, and they yielded to the decision with the

kindest spirit. On the eve of the departure of their beloved pastor, a public dinner was given to him by the congregation; and on the day on which he started for his new home, a large escort accompanied him several miles on his way. For thirty days afterwards many of the brethren there wore crape on their arms, as an expression of their sense of the loss they had sustained.

The call of Mr. Hoffmeier to Lancaster is dated Aug. 8th, 1806; he began his labors in that city in October of that year. In connection with Lancaster he also served the congregation of New Providence, twelve miles east, until 1816, after which his labors were confined to Lancaster. His ministry in Lancaster covered a period of twenty-five years, terminating in 1831, when his pastoral relations with the congregation ceased. The immediate cause of his withdrawal from the congregation as pastor, was not so much the infirmity of years, as difficulty arising out of the growing use of the English language. With Mr. Hoffmeier, attachment to the language, and, in part, the manners of his native land rested in a deeply-rooted principle. He imagined that the very life and true prosperity of his Church depended upon the maintenance and perpetuation of these national peculiarities. And the appearance of things seemed to him to justify his opinions. Were not personal pride and devotion to gaudy fashion the marked characteristics of the English community around him? While the congregation to which he ministered was apparelled in plain and simple, though tidy and decent gar-



ments, did he not see the Christian women, especially, that passed his door on their way to and from other churches, adorned with waving plumes, and variegated hats, and rustling satin or silken robes? Had he not some cause to fear the influence of this love of gaudy dress, especially upon the more youthful portion of his unsophisticated flock? These, and kindred imaginings and sights, seemed to him a full justification of his dislike of the English language and his opposition to its introduction. That he was most unfortunately wrong in his opinions, no one will question. But he had in those days many companions in the same error, and it was for persons in his circumstances a most natural mistake — a mistake, moreover, which, in a man of his years, and in one who had so long and acceptably served the congregation, should perhaps have been endured with greater charity and patience. It resulted, however, in a rupture between a majority in the congregation and himself, which led to his retirement from the active duties of the ministry.

The trials connected with this occasion greatly increased the weight of advanced years, and he felt that his end must soon come. The last few years of his life were spent in the family of one of his sons-in-law, and their sadness was alleviated by the kindness of a number of true Christian friends and the affectionate services of faithful children. He died on the 18th of March, 1838, in peace and hope, conscious that he had “not lived in vain nor labored in vain,” and yet relying, for acceptance with God, entirely upon Jesus Christ. His beloved and

faithful wife had departed a year before, preceding him to the mansions prepared for them. During his last illness, he suffered excruciating bodily pain. In the midst of one of these paroxysms of pain, some attending friends expressed sympathy, and asked what they could do for him. He replied, with a thankful smile, "God will strengthen me; for those that put their trust in Him shall never be forsaken." Thus the grace which had supported him under other trials sustained him to the end.

His funeral was attended by all the clergy of the city, and a large number of citizens. The consistory of the congregation also testified their respect and veneration for their former pastor by attending his funeral in a body, adopting resolutions expressive of their sense of his worth, and wearing for a time the usual badge of mourning.

His body lies buried directly under the pulpit of the First German Reformed church in Lancaster. Immediately above the grave, a monumental marble tablet, on the walls of the church, records his memory in the following inscription:

Erected

By Members of this Congregation to Perpetuate

The Memory and Pious Services of

THE REV. JOHN HENRY HOFFMEIER,

Born at Anhalt-Cöthen, Germany,

March 17, 1760.

He was a graduate of the Theological

University at Halle, 1782;

Embarked for the U. S. of A., 1793.

He became Pastor of this Congregation in 1806,

And died a Faithful Servant of the

Lord Jesus Christ, March 18th, 1836.

Mr. Hoffmeier possessed, to a praiseworthy degree, the proper qualifications of a gospel minister. Naturally endowed with a good mind, and talents suited to his office, he sought to improve his gifts by faithful and persevering study. He was also a diligent writer. Although his authorship was limited to the publication of but a few sermons, the mass of MSS. which he left behind, as well of sermons as of exegetical and other treatises, prove that he did not neglect the labors of the study. He possessed a large and well-selected library, and diligently read the books which it contained. Although he rarely used notes in preaching, except during his last years, he wrote out in full most of his sermons in earlier life.

In the performance of pastoral duties, he was also zealous and faithful. During his ministry in Lancaster, six hundred and seventy-four persons were added to the Church by confirmation. The poor and the sick received his special attention. Although his salary was small, his liberality to the needy was extraordinary. There were many poor to mourn his loss. As a preacher, he ranked high in his palmy days. Combining earnestness with substantial thought and fervent sympathy, his pulpit efforts were generally acceptable. In the War of 1812, many of his members belonged to the companies of volunteers which went from Lancaster to Baltimore. Before leaving for the seat of war, the volunteers requested him to preach a sermon to them, with reference to the occasion of their leaving home. He did so. The sermon is an earnest

and eloquent testimony to his patriotism. By special request, he wrote it out, and allowed it to be published. He took a lively interest in the war, and subsequently visited his members and fellow-citizens in their camp, near Baltimore, and there again preached to them.

He took an active part, also, in promoting the general interests of the Church, warmly advocating the establishment of literary institutions, including a theological seminary for the education of young men for the ministry.

In his private life, Mr. Hoffmeier's example was worthy of all imitation by ministers of the gospel. Though cheerful, his cheerfulness was chastened by piety, and ever kept within the bounds of the strictest Christian and ministerial propriety. In this respect, he was considerably in advance of the manners of the period in which he lived. The principles imbibed, and the habits acquired, at Franke's Asylum, were maintained by him to the last. Indeed, his rigid regard for the requirements of Christian morality led him often to administer such reproofs against what were too often considered innocent vices, as exposed him to the ill-will of those who indulged in such habits. Profane swearing, intemperance, and Sabbath-breaking, he abhorred, and earnestly reproved.

In these principles and manners he also endeavored, as a Christian father, to rear his children. Nor were his efforts fruitless. He had the pleasure, before his death, of seeing all his children become worthy members of the German Reformed Church,

and one of them — his youngest son — engaged in the duties of the ministry. Since then, another son and three grandsons have assumed the responsibilities of the same holy office. He ruled his own house well, and the happy fruits of his faithfulness appear in the blessings of the covenant and its promises, as they have descended upon his children and his children's children.

## REV. WILLIAM HIESTER.

1770 — 1828.

WILLIAM HIESTER was born in Bern Township, Berks County, Pa., on the 11th day of November, in the year of our Lord 1770. In early years, he was of a pious turn of mind; he also grew up exemplary in his life, and manifested a desire to improve in an intellectual and spiritual way. His excellent standing in school is seen from a certificate given him by his teacher, which has been preserved.

As a youth, he learned the trade of a carpenter, and spent some time at that business. A circumstance, however, occurred which was the occasion of turning the current of his life into quite a different channel. A young companion of his, who had been working with him at the same trade, died very suddenly. It fell to his lot to make his coffin. It is easy to conceive his feelings while engaged in this solemn work. Before it was finished, he was overwhelmed with the deepest sense of the vanity of life, the solemnity and probable nearness of death, and the great necessity of being always ready for the coming of the Son of Man. His mind was very much awakened and quickened on the subject of religion. Residing at the time with his brother Daniel, near the Blue Mountain church, his spirit-

ual distress grew to such a degree that he arose from his bed, one night, awakened his brother, and made known to him his forlorn state of mind. His brother directed and consoled him as well as he could, and he felt relieved. He prayed earnestly for a deeper sense of the divine favor, and devoted himself with renewed consecration to the service of his Redeemer. As the result of this earnest inward struggle, he resolved to give his life to Jesus Christ in the work of the holy ministry, towards which he now felt himself drawn by an irresistible power.

Mr. Hiester commenced his theological studies with the Rev. Daniel Wagner, of York, Pennsylvania, in the year 1796 or 1797, at the same time taking lessons also in the Greek language from the Lutheran minister of that place. At the Synod which met in Lancaster, Pa., April 30th, 1798, he presented himself for examination. At the same time "a request was laid before Synod, from two congregations in Donegal, asking for permission to have Mr. William Hiester as their pastor. It was resolved that a committee be appointed to hold a *tentamen* with him, and report the result to Synod." The committee reported that he rendered satisfaction, whereupon the Synod "resolved that he be permitted to serve the congregations in Donegal as a catechist, under the direction of his present teacher, until the next meeting of Synod."

He accordingly repaired to these congregations and served them as directed by Synod. At the

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<sup>1</sup> Blaser's church, and the church in Maytown, Lancaster County, Pa.

next synodical meeting, in 1799, the same congregations, which he had now served for one year, sent a petition to Synod asking for his examination and ordination. The committee to whom he was referred reported "that they regard him as qualified for the ministerial office." He was then directed to be ordained, which solemnity took place soon after in his own congregations, conducted by Revs. Wagner, Becker, and Hendel, Jr. He now preached also at Rapho and Manheim.

At the Synod of York, May 12th, 1800, "the congregation at Lebanon, together with three others connected with it, transmitted to Synod a call to the Rev. Mr. Hiester. It was resolved that, as the expression of the opinion of Synod, Mr. Hiester ought to accept the call, with the understanding, however, that he continue to serve the congregations to which he at present preaches." Agreeably to the wish of Synod, he accepted this call, and soon after removed to Lebanon, continuing to serve the congregations in Lancaster County as before, as far as he could. He had now a field already too large; and yet it continued to widen on his hands. He was soon called upon to supply other vacant congregations in Lebanon County. He preached in this way at Pinegrove, Shupp's, Wenrich's, Palmer's, and Gunkel's churches. These places he visited as often as he could, chiefly on week-days, preaching for them, catechizing and confirming large classes of youths, and holding communion once or twice a year. The amount of labor which he performed at this time is truly astonishing, as



appears from his numerous appointments marked down in his pocket almanacs. During some whole months, almost every day is marked with one or more appointments for preaching or catechizing. He preached very frequently on week-days, every Sabbath twice and sometimes three times, riding from eight to ten miles between appointments. He preached also on numerous funeral occasions, and attended to many baptisms in private families.

He continued to serve the congregations in Lancaster County with great faithfulness and self-sacrifice till the year 1808, when he gave them, in a flourishing condition, into the pastoral care of Rev. Henry B. Schaffner.

Mr. Hiester was a remarkably punctual man. He was always much concerned to meet all his appointments, and to be there promptly at the hour. Neither rain nor muddy roads would dismay him. In order to make the time when appointments were far apart, he frequently carried his dinner in his pocket, and ate it on his horse while riding from one point to another. He always went on horseback, but never rode fast; and in order still to be punctual, he frequently left home before daylight in the winter, and returned late at night. Being himself instant in season and out of season, regarding no weather, he took no excuse from his members for being absent from church in bad weather. On one occasion of the kind, when the audience was much smaller than usual, one of the members, after service, suggested that there was an excuse for the people as the day was very unfavorable; to which

he promptly replied, in the words of Solomon, "The slothful man saith, There is a lion without; I shall be slain in the streets."

Mr. Hiester took a deep and active interest in the Church at large. When the project of establishing the Theological Seminary came before the Church, he immediately became its warm friend and faithful advocate with the people. He contended in its favor against much prejudice and strong opposition. He would spend hours in private conversation with his people, to remove their difficulties, show them its importance, and expose the false arguments which were brought up against it from various sources. He would often wind up by saying, with great earnestness, "Since you cannot accuse me of having at any time told you an untruth, why should you not believe me when I speak to you on this subject?" His arguments in favor of the Seminary, and the confidence which his members had in his sincerity, did much to save his people from being carried away by that flood of opposition which bore with great heaviness upon his charge from all sides. Few, perhaps, have reflected, that much of the seed from which the institutions of the Church have since reaped good fruits in the Lebanon charge, was sown by him.

As a preacher, Mr. Hiester was popular. He had a fine flow of language, and spoke without notes. He had an excellent memory; and it was frequently remarked that he seemed to have the entire Scriptures at his command; he could quote passages with much facility, and strikingly to the point. Besides,

he had a fine musical voice, which was much cultivated by singing, an exercise of which he was exceedingly fond, and in which he excelled.

Mr. Hiester seems to have been diligent in his studies, so far as his numerous labors allowed him time to be in them. He has left a large number of manuscript sermons, which we have had the opportunity of examining. His sermons are emphatically evangelical — Christ is the centre of them all. Nothing seems to have had weight with him except what flowed from Christ, or pointed to Him. In Him he saw a full and an only Saviour. Thus, of necessity, all that man does or can do will not save him. He insisted frequently that true piety must show itself in deep self-abasement and true humility. This, Mr. Hiester exemplified in his own life and spirit, being in an eminent degree meek and humble. It was his study, as his sermons show, to lead men away from all self, that they might repose in the mighty arms of Jesus, the Saviour. His sermons are a simple, but well-arranged and earnest exposition of the gospel. There is generally an inward rather than an outward connection and system. He evidently aimed more at creating and satisfying a true hunger of the soul, than to please the taste with delicacies. He insisted constantly upon the great truth that a truly gracious state must have as its witness an outward life conformable to the will of God. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” A favorite expression of his was, “Deeds speak louder than words.” Nothing pained this good man more than when he saw in any of

his members, or in other professing Christians, an exhibition of that spirit which leads men to "trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others." He was opposed to all forms of fanaticism, and that censoriousness and spiritual pride which flow from it. He used to say, in reference to this spirit, "I would rather hear persons preach their own religion by their lives and conduct than by their words."

His predecessor held prayer-meetings in one of the congregations, and he continued them, generally in private houses in the neighborhood of the church, on Saturday evenings before the Sabbath on which he preached. After some time, he saw that a number came to prayer-meeting who would not come to church. He saw that in this plausible garb an actually evil spirit was insinuating itself into the hearts of some of the people; and he rightly judged that when a prayer-meeting leads persons away from the church, rather than to it, there must be something wrong, and that a dangerous spirit has taken hold of the people to deceive them. He explained to the people this fact, and discontinued the meetings under that form.

He was unwearied in his attention to catechetical instruction; and on these occasions was in the habit of laying the truth to the heart in the way of most powerful and impressive practical application. His confirmations were always seasons of great solemnity and interest. In Lebanon, he kept up the excellent custom — practised in many of the old congregations in an early day — of inviting all who

intended to commune to call at the parsonage some time during the week previous to communion, to receive such instruction and direction as they might require. On such occasions those prone to carelessness were admonished, and the troubled were comforted by words suited to their circumstances. Besides this, he never omitted the preparatory service. On such occasions, after preaching a suitable sermon, he used the liturgical form appointed for this purpose, earnestly desiring the people heartily and audibly to respond to the questions asked. On communion days he exhorted and reproved, in the most earnest and solemn manner, such as stood aloof from this holy ordinance, telling them that they were despisers of Jesus, and turned away sinfully from the blood that bought their pardon!

A life of such intense anxiety as that which Mr. Hiester led, must, as a matter of course, gradually wear upon the stoutest constitution. His began to give way before the middle of his ministerial career was reached; and his health began to fail fifteen years before his death. He was much troubled with a cough for years, which indicated to his friends that consumption was quietly seating itself in his system. About a year before his death, he had an attack of hemorrhage; but he still continued to perform all his ministerial duties till about three months before his end. The last sermon he preached was at the funeral of a young boy, on which occasion his lungs bled as he stood at the grave. He preached appropriately for the funeral, and also as his last sermon, from the words, "Again, I leave the world, and go to the Father," John xvi. 28.

For several weeks before his death, he was not able to leave his bed. During this time he was often heard to pray audibly, reciting, for his own comfort, passages from the Bible and verses from the Hymn-Book. He would frequently repeat, "Where I am, there shall also my servant be." He said to his family, in the spirit of entire resignation, "God will see to it that all things come to pass in that way which is best." He loved particularly to hear the hymn sung, beginning, —

"Er kommt, Er kommt, geht Ihm entgegen,  
Der Heiland aller Welt erscheint;"

and he was always moved to tears by the lines in the second verse :

"Kein Sünder ist Ihm zu geringe,  
Der Ihn um Gnad' und Hülfe fleht!"

So prominently did that deep humility, which was such a shining trait in his piety and life, show itself to the last. A minister who visited him near his end, quoted to him the passage: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;" "to which," said the dying man, "I will gladly add, with Paul, 'of whom I am chief!'" To one of his church-members he said, "I have done much in the world which the people call good, but it must all stand back; I shall be saved by free grace alone." He had also his dark hours, coming in between those of pleasant assurance, when he would be heard to say, "Jesus, thou, too, wast exceeding sorrowful — Thou, too, didst feel forsaken."

To the very last he manifested great concern for his congregations and for the Seminary. A few days before his death, he earnestly charged one of his members that they should procure a successor from the Old Synod, and not from the New one, which stood opposed to the Seminary. On the night preceding his death, he reached forth his hand and took an affectionate and solemn farewell of his wife and family. Shortly before he breathed his last, he said: "Mein Anker hat guten Grund!" — "My anchor holds me firmly." Some time before his death he had a strong impression that he would die on Friday, the day on which our blessed Saviour was crucified. His presentiment was fulfilled, not only as to the day, but also as to the hour. He died on Friday afternoon, between three and four o'clock, February 8th, 1828. All his churches which had bells tolled them, when the sad news came to them of their pastor's death. On Sabbath the church in Lebanon was kept closed, although service had been appointed, and the minister who was to preach was in town. How solemnly silent was that Sabbath; and how deeply, amid its sacred stillness, did the people realize that the lips of their beloved pastor were closed forever on earth!

The funeral took place on Monday morning. At ten o'clock, an unusual number of people from all his congregations were assembled in Lebanon, around the parsonage. While the procession moved towards the church, the choir sung a suitable hymn. The coffin was placed before the altar. An appropriate sermon was then delivered by Rev. William

Hendel, D.D., from the words: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers," Deut. xxxi. 16. He was followed in a brief address by Rev. Mr. Ernst, the Lutheran pastor in Lebanon, who spoke particularly of the great humility of the departed man of God. After the congregation had united in singing the beautiful hymn, "Jesus, meine Zuversicht," the remains of Mr. Hiester were carried to the graveyard and deposited in the earth, near the church in which he had so earnestly proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation for twenty-eight years.

The following memorial, with the stanzas, composed for the purpose by Rev. Mr. Van der Sloot, Sen., shortly before his own death, is inscribed upon his tombstone:

Zum Andenken  
an

WILLIAM HIESTER,

28 Jahr Prediger in Libanon und den umliegenden Reformirten Gemeinden; Geboren den 11ten November, 1770; Gestorben den 8ten Februar, 1828. Alt 57 Jahre, 2 Monate, und 28 Tage.

Oft hörtest Du, geliebte Heerde,  
Das Wort vom Kreuz aus meinem Mund,  
Es sey Dir heilig stets: Es werde  
Dein immer fester Glaubensgrund:  
Nur Der gewährt Dir Zuversicht,  
Wenn stehend einst Dein Auge bricht.

Auch mir brach's doch nicht meine Liebe,  
Die mich mit Dir so eng verband —  
Die Jahre lang aus reinem Triebe  
In Deinem Kreis ich oft empfand —  
Sie — diese Liebe bricht nicht ab —  
Reicht über Welt und Tod und Grab.



O Gott, wie werd' ich mich dann freuen,  
Wenn für der Erde Mühe Lohn  
Ich, Viele von Euch, Ihm Getreuen,  
Empfangen darf vor Seinem Thron:  
Wenn Jesus spricht: "Auch ihr seyd mein!  
Geht in die Friedenshütten ein!"

## REV. CHARLES HELFFENSTEIN.

1781 — 1842.

CHARLES HELFFENSTEIN was a son of the Rev. J. C. Albertus Helffenstein, for many years pastor of the German Reformed congregation at Germantown. He was born March 29th, 1781. In his youth, he turned his attention to the art of printing, and served for some time as an apprentice to this business. His mind began, however, to turn towards the holy ministry, towards which he felt himself drawn more and more. He at length abandoned the idea of being a printer, and resolved to devote himself to the ministry. He was still comparatively young when he commenced his studies under Dr. Becker, of Lancaster.

At the meeting of Synod in May, 1801, at the request of his teacher, Dr. Becker, a committee was appointed to meet in Reading, on the first Wednesday in October, for the purpose of examining him and Mr. Wack, Jr. The examination was satisfactory, and both were licensed and ordained by the committee, they having been authorized so to do by Synod. He immediately received a call from the congregations in Allemengel, Berks County, Pa. He had not been in this charge a year, when he received a call from Goshenhoppen, which he ac-

cepted, having been advised to do so by Dr. Becker. It was contrary to the synodical rules to leave a charge, or accept a call from another, without the counsel and consent of Synod. Complaint was accordingly made against Mr. Helffenstein for this proceeding; but when it was found that he was advised thereto by his former teacher, he was excused, and required to remain in his present charge till the end of his year. Dr. Becker also made explanations at the next annual meeting which were satisfactory to Synod.

In Goshenhoppen he labored about a year, and then removed to Ephrata, in Lancaster County, taking charge of the congregations lying in that region, where he remained five years. He then received a call from the congregation at Germantown that his father had served two terms, which he accepted. Here he remained three years. After this he was settled for a period of eighteen years in the Hanover and Berlin charge, in York County, Pa. Subsequently, he labored for some time in Rockingham County, Va. His last charge was Mechanicsburg, Cumberland County, Pa. During the last three years of his life, he was not able, on account of bodily infirmity, to exercise the functions of a pastor; but still preached as opportunity offered, residing, during the last two years, with his family at Reading. When he could labor no more as a regular minister, he employed his time, and supported his family, by selling "Helffenstein's Theology," the Work of his brother, Dr. Samuel Helffenstein.

He was in the ministry nearly forty-two years, during which time he honored the cause of his Master by an upright, devoted, and consistent life. He was confined to his bed for three weeks; and on Monday morning, the 19th of December, 1842, he fell asleep, as we have reason to believe, in his Redeemer. His last words were: "O Lord Jesus, come ———" his voice stifled, and the word "quickly" could not be uttered by his lips.

To his friend, the pastor of the church in Reading, who had the privilege of being often at his bedside during his last illness, he unbosomed his religious feelings and exercises most freely and cordially; and he bore his last dying testimony to the doctrines of the cross, which he so long preached, and so happily illustrated in his life. In a variety of expressions, on his dying-bed, he magnified *the amazing grace of God* in Christ Jesus, and the astonishing exhibition of his mercy to the penitent sinner in the cross of his dear Saviour. The mercy and grace of God to the humble believer constituted his constant theme of meditation and of his conversation with the writer, on his dying-bed; and he would often break out in his meditations, amid surrounding silence, "Oh, how great is His mercy; how unbounded His grace to poor sinners who repent and believe! I am quite astonished at the view! My soul is bewildered in the view!" "Oh, I will have none but Christ! How great is His love!" Many expressions of the same import he uttered during the period of his illness; and all his time, when not interrupted by visitors or

by paroxysms of his disease, was taken up by meditation and prayer. Often he unconsciously meditated and prayed in an audible voice. At one particular time he said to the pastor: "I wish to tell you all my feelings and my desires. I have nothing on earth that holds me back. I was led to embrace religion many years ago, and I have had many sharp trials since, and God has given me many evidences of his favor. But, my dear brother, I feel as if I wished to sit *only where Mary sat — at the Saviour's feet; at Jesus' feet I will sit; and oh! how undeserving I am of His grace.* I naturally feel for my dear family and children; but I know God can and will provide for them. I am willing to submit to my Lord. His will be done! But here I fix my trust, and I have good hope. Only think of His precious promises! I am not afraid to die. My Redeemer liveth." And in his meditations, he was heard repeatedly to say, "Oh, how precious is that promise! All His promises are precious!" And often, when the pastor aided his memory, bringing Scripture promises adapted to his case to his mind, he would exclaim, "Oh, how cheering and encouraging that is!" It having pleased God to give him his senses and his powers of mind to the last moment, he ceased not to commune with God in meditation and prayer, and *even died praying.* Repeatedly the pastor retired from his bedside, repeating to himself the memorable words of Scripture: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" His end was peace. He died as he lived — an humble, hopeful disciple of the Lord Jesus

Christ; and the loss which his family and the Church sustained in his death, we have good reason to believe, is his great gain; he having obtained a good report through faith, received the promise and the rewards of grace.

As a citizen, he was affable and unobtrusive; as a father and husband, kind, bland, affectionate, and provident to the utmost of his ability; as a Christian, he was humble, unassuming, sincere, and conscientious; as a minister of the gospel, he was faithful and affectionate, not seeking his own wealth and glory, but the glory of Christ and the spiritual welfare of his flock; and as a friend, he was frank, candid and faithful.

“We deeply feel,” says the pastor of the Reading congregation, “that we have lost, in his death, a valuable and faithful friend, whose daily prayers went up to God’s throne, from a heart that knew no guile, in our behalf.”

On Wednesday his mortal remains were borne to the cemetery of the German Reformed church in Reading, Pa., by the consistory, headed by the clergy of the place, and followed by a large procession of weeping relatives and friends; and the occasion was improved by an appropriate discourse in the German language, on the words of our Redeemer, John xii. 26, “And where I am, there shall also my servant be,” by the Rev. Thomas H. Leinbach, of Myerstown, who was followed by the pastor of the church, giving a succinct history of the deceased, in the German and English languages. His age was 61 years, 8 months, and 20 days.

“Mr. Helffenstein,” says one who knew him well, “had a very simple, childlike confidence in God and his revealed truth, and great singleness of heart in religion, which can well stand in the place of more robust and shining qualities by themselves.” He was a very eccentric man; but this feature in his spirit always took the direction of the most childlike piety and innocence. Both his body and mind were often moved by sudden impulse, but only to reveal the spirit of the simplest piety and the brightest corruscations of thought.

We may here give a specimen. On one occasion he was with the Rev. Daniel Weiser in his study. He walked the room with hasty steps, relating a long and interesting history from his ministerial experience. Suddenly he stopped, broke off his story, laid his hand on Mr. Weiser’s knee, and without anything perceptible that could suggest the matter, said: “Brother Weiser, some young ministers start out in great zeal, but do not think seriously and deeply on what they are about to do; after a while they leave their charge for another, and when they have been there a while, see that they have missed the mark, and then wish themselves back again!” Then he started again in his walk up and down the room, and took up his former story where he had left off. Mr. Weiser never forgot this incident; and says that, though he has since had half a dozen calls to other charges, this erratic remark has been the means of keeping him in his present charge over twenty-four years. Many similar remarks of Mr. Helffenstein, made in

a similar way, are well remembered by our older ministers and members who personally knew him. Mr. Helffenstein preached with great warmth, speaking "as under an awful sense of terror," of which even his body gave signs. He had a strong mystic vein, and professed at times, with the most childlike sincerity, to have seen angels. He was very conscientious in all that he did. It is said that he almost always ended his parochial report by saying: "I endeavor to keep a good conscience," to the truth of which his whole life bore the surest testimony.

Towards the end of his life he was straitened in his worldly circumstances; yet, by the care of his heavenly Father, he was enabled to support his family, and to give an only son a medical education. On this son he doted, and devoted himself with great zeal and self-denial to his good; yet he has since sadly disappointed the fond expectations of his father—not by the want of talent and amiable disposition, but through the besetment and mastery of evil company and sin. He is said to be dead. Did not the prayers of his sainted father, which are a memorial before God, at last, perhaps, result in the redemption of this son not only of many hopes, but also of many prayers and tears?



## REV. GEORGE WACK.

1776 — 1856.

GEORGE WACK, eldest son of Casper and Barbara Wack, was born in Bucks County, Pa., March 1, 1776. After having pursued a course of classical studies, he commenced the study of theology under the direction of his father, who then resided and preached at Rockaway, N. J. His first sermon was preached at Knowlton, N. J., on the 22d of July, 1797, on John xvii. 3. He was examined and ordained to the gospel ministry in Reading, Pa., in October, 1801, by a committee appointed for that purpose at a previous meeting of Synod; and on the 25th of April, 1802, he took charge of Boehm's (Whitpain), and Wentz's (Worcester), Montgomery County, Pa. In 1806 he took, in connection with the other two, the Hilltown congregation, in Bucks County. Within the territory, covered by these congregations, he labored throughout the whole of his ministry. For several years he was the only minister in or near the neighborhood where he resided; and he was often called upon to attend funerals, administer the holy ordinance of baptism, and perform the marriage ceremony. He was highly esteemed and beloved by his congregations whilst he served them as pastor. At Boehm's, he preached

thirty-two years, till 1834; at Wentz's, forty-three, till 1845; in Hilltown, twenty-two, from 1806 to 1828; and at Gwynedd, ten. The congregations in which he labored increased so much that he was obliged to give up the Hilltown church, and preach alternately for Boehm's and Wentz's. After he resigned as pastor of Boehm's church, he revived a small Reformed congregation at St. Peter's church, Gwynedd, and took that in connection with Wentz's, where he labored until 1844.

During the last eight or ten years of his life he was more or less afflicted with a troublesome cough, which rendered him unable to preach, except occasionally for his brethren.

In 1805 he was united in holy matrimony with Elizabeth Pannebecker, with whom he lived forty-four years, and had five children.

When he first entered the ministry, his congregations were feeble, and unable to afford him the necessary temporal support. He was therefore obliged, to some extent, to carry on farming. The parsonage farm, on which he lived, contained thirty-seven acres, which he superintended himself. Often was he seen following the plough and quarrying stone through the week; and when the Sabbath came he would ride many miles to fill his appointments.

In various branches of the mechanic arts he was quite skilful, and in many cases manufactured his own farming implements.

In his religious views, he strongly adhered to the doctrines of the Church as taught by the Reformed

Fathers, and was not willing to lay them aside to follow the various novelties of the age. His advice was always to adhere to the language of the Heidelberg Catechism.

From 1817 to 1820, during the administration of Gov. Findley, he held the office of Register for Montgomery County, and was a faithful officer. All business intrusted to his care was promptly attended to. He was often called upon to settle estates and adjust disputes.

In his manners he was plain, and in his dress old-fashioned. He was very fond of company, and took great delight in relating reminiscences of the olden time. He wrote a Work on Theology, in Latin; and towards the latter part of his life, when health would permit, he was engaged in translating it into English, but failed to complete it.

The last time that he attended the annual meeting of Philadelphia Classis, of which he was a member, was at Boehm's church, May 14, 1855. At that meeting he said to a friend, "This, I think, is the last meeting we shall have on earth, and I desired to attend." His saying was true: it was the last. At a communion held at Boehm's, Nov. 5, 1854, this aged father was present, and assisted the pastor in administering the holy sacrament. It was truly solemn to see him, and hear the words that fell from his lips on that occasion. It was the last time that he gave the bread and wine to those with whom he had labored for more than thirty years.

Rev. Jesse B. Knipe, pastor of the Lyonsville church, Chester County, and Dr. S. R. Fisher,

present editor of the German Reformed Messenger, studied theology with Father Wack.

He was remarkably fond of music, and had musical instruments of different kinds. He often spent hours together in indulging his love of music. Among the rest, he owned a large organ which his own hands had made.

In his appointments for preaching, and other engagements, he was always punctual. Father Wack always occupied a prominent position in the Church. His sermons were prepared with great care, and always well suited to the occasion.

In the year 1846, being then about seventy years of age, he found it necessary to retire from the active duties of the ministry. Old age, however, would not of itself have necessitated his retirement from labor, had it not been that a disease of a dropsical tendency began to develop itself, which soon became so deep-seated as to preclude all possibility of public speaking, and defy all means of remedy. It clung to him for the space of ten years, battling stoutly with his elastic constitution, till finally, with the help of advancing years, it gained the mastery; and three months previous to his death it turned into consumption. God was merciful in this. He went down slowly and consciously to the grave. He made good use of this gracious indulgence. He read, he prayed, he examined his hopes, he reviewed his life and his interest in the great atonement, waiting for and expecting the appointed time when his change should come.

After the death of his aged companion, who died

in 1849, he relinquished housekeeping, and made his home with his son-in-law, Philip S. Gerhart, near Centre Square, Whitpain Township, Montgomery County, until his death. He died Feb. 17th, 1856, aged 79 years, 11 months, and 14 days; having been in the ministry fifty-nine years. On a Sabbath day, having devoted the Sabbaths of nearly half a century to the preaching of the Cross, it was his privilege to preach once more by his calm, gradual, and peaceful departure. About the going down of the sun, the sun of his earthly life also set, as we firmly believe, to arise in a holier and a brighter sphere.

On the 21st, his mortal remains were conveyed to the cemetery of the time-honored Boehm's Reformed church, followed by a very large number of friends and relatives. The ministers present were Revs. Father Helffenstein, Samuel Helffenstein, Jr., John Naille, Jesse B. Knipe, George D. Wolff, E. M. Long, J. S. Ermentrout, and S. G. Wagner, of the Reformed Church, and the Rev. John Hassler, of the Lutheran Church, with whom he was quite intimate, and who frequently visited him during his last sickness. At the house of the deceased, a sermon, in the German language, was delivered by Father Helffenstein, from Rev. xiv. 13, and prayer offered by Rev. John Naille. At the church, an English sermon was delivered, by the Rev. J. S. Ermentrout, on the same subject.

Since Father Wack's death, his children have marked his resting-place by erecting a fine marble memorial stone.

His death was calm and peaceful. He departed in the full triumph of faith. Only a few weeks before his death, his confidence in his Redeemer was unusually strong. He appeared to anticipate his latter end. In conversation with Rev. Dr. Helfenstein, he said, "My time is short; I shall soon be at rest." Being duly conscious of death's approach, he often spoke of it, and longed, with the great apostle, to depart and be at home with Christ, his Redeemer. He could emphatically say, that he had fought the good fight, kept the faith, finished his course; and that henceforth there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, should give him at that day; and not to him only, but to all those that love his appearing. Thus was he privileged to feel in his own heart the sweet consolations of the blessed Saviour's love and of His gospel, which, as an ambassador of Christ, he had so often imparted to the sick and dying in the course of his long life.

During his ministry, he solemnized eight hundred and twenty-five marriages; preached five thousand times; baptized one thousand infants; confirmed about the same number, and officiated at nearly as many funerals.

In personal appearance, Mr. Wack was of medium size, and erect; in his habits, orderly, frugal, and laborious. His character for childlike simplicity and unsuspecting confidence was remarkable. Without a shadow of dissimulation himself, he trusted implicitly in the integrity of all with whom he had to do. The duties of his sacred office he performed

regularly, with honest simplicity of purpose, and faithfully. What he knew to be duty, he would have felt it to be sin to omit, if in his power to perform it. Hence the long rides for preaching and other religious services which during his long ministry he so unweariedly performed, through heat and cold, and sleet and storm. He was ambitious, not to shine as the oracle of wisdom, or as "some great one," but simply to be "found faithful." He distrusted his own abilities, and was unassuming to a fault. His strong native powers of mind, had they been duly developed by enterprise and application, might have elevated him high in the scale of notoriety. But, after leaving the University of Pennsylvania, he settled down to the simple duties of his plain country charge, and was content beyond a king on his throne. If he erred in this extreme, his fault — if there is such a thing, as the poet supposes — "leaned on virtue's side." It is better to be content among the humble than among the ambitious to strive "who shall be greatest."

## REV. FREDERICK WILLIAM VAN DER SLOOT.

1773 — 1831.

FREDERICK WILLIAM VAN DER SLOOT was born in Dessau, Germany, Nov. 11th, 1773. He was an only son of Rev. Frederick William Van der Sloot, at first minister in different places in Europe, also for a time co-rector in Dessau, and lastly, minister in Montgomery County, Pa. His mother was Louisa Henrietta, youngest daughter of Professor Shultze, of Berlin.

Mr. Van der Sloot studied in Europe. In the year 1801, he emigrated to America. At a meeting of Synod in Philadelphia, May 18th, 1802, he was licensed, and ordained to the gospel ministry in 1803.<sup>1</sup> Soon after, he became the pastor of seven or eight congregations, which his father had served in Lehigh and Northampton Counties. On the 11th of Nov., 1802, he was married to Catharine Pauli, daughter of the Rev. Philip Reinhold Pauli, of Reading, Pa., by Dr. Hendel, the younger, of Tulpehocken. In December, 1802, he removed to Northampton County, taking up his residence in Allen Township. He preached in those congrega-

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, 1802, pp. 31-33; 1803, p. 34; and 1804, p. 37.



tions with much acceptance till 1811. In May of that year, he received an invitation to Germantown. Here he labored till Nov. 11th, 1813, when, in obedience to a call which he had received, he removed to New Goshenhoppen, where he served the congregations of New and Old Goshenhoppen, Trappe, Long Swamp, and others, for the space of about five years. December 29th, 1818, he removed to Philadelphia, having received a call to establish a new German congregation there. He preached at first in the Commissioners' Hall, on Third Street, till they had erected the church on St. John Street, between Green and Tammany, called Salem's church, and afterwards for many years served by the venerable Dr. Bibighaus. The congregation was made up principally of Europeans, who were for the most part poor. Mr. Van der Sloot spared no labor or pains to collect the necessary money with which to erect the church, making various visits for this purpose to other congregations. At length his untiring efforts were crowned with full success, and his congregation were in possession of a church of their own.

In March, 1824, he left Philadelphia, and accepted a call to Rockingham County, Va., where he at first served eight, and at length ten congregations,—Mill Creek, Uppertrack, Willfang's, and Propst's, in Hardy and Pendleton Counties; Hawk's-bill and St. Paul's, in Shenandoah County; and Pine, St. John's, and Roeder's, in Rockingham County. Here he preached about three years, when, in the spring of 1827, he received a call from

congregations in York and Adams counties — Pigeon Hill, Holtzschwam, Ströher's, Rosstown, Franklin, in York County, and Bermudian, Oxford, Abbottstown, and Berlin, in Adams County. These congregations he continued to serve up to the time of his death.

In August, 1831, Mr. Van der Sloom began to be afflicted with dropsy of the chest. He became gradually weaker, till it pleased the Lord to remove him by death. During his sickness he was daily visited by his numerous friends, from the congregations which he had served, who highly esteemed and honored him for his many virtues, his learning, and his pulpit talents. He died, surrounded by many friends, in Paradise Township, York County, on the 14th of December, 1831, aged 58 years, 1 month, and 3 days. The last words which he uttered, only a few minutes before he expired, were: "Ich höre die heiligen Engel Gottes im Himmel singen" — "I hear the holy angels of God in heaven singing." He is buried in the graveyard connected with the Holtzschwam church in York County, Pa.

Mr. Van der Sloom was an excellent linguist, having been well acquainted with the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, and German languages. He had fine talents and taste for poetry, and composed many hymns and poems in his time, a number of which have been printed. Those poems on the burning of the theatre in Richmond, Virginia; on the burning of many deaf and dumb in the Philadelphia Asylum, as well as the hymns which he

composed for the laying of the corner-stone and consecration of the church and organ in Philadelphia, are of especial merit. When he was already confined to his bed in his last sickness, he received a letter from the sons of the Rev. William Hiester, of Lebanon, requesting him to write some verses for his tombstone, which he did. They will be found quoted in the life of Mr. Hiester. It is said that on funeral occasions, when he had no hymn book convenient, he made verses impromptu, and always very suitable to the occasion. There are yet many beautiful poems extant among his manuscripts which ought to be published. He had also a great talent for music. He was gifted with an exceedingly strong voice, which could be distinctly heard over a multitude of singers; and he was generally his own chorister in his congregations.

Two of Mr. Van der Sloot's sons entered the holy ministry, and are still living to cherish the memory of their departed father.

## REV. JOHN BROWN, D. D.

1771—1850.

JOHN BROWN was born near Bremen, a free city in the Duchy of Oldenburg, on the 21st day of July, in the year of our Lord 1771. He was introduced into full communion with the Church by confirmation, 1785, and was pious from his youth. He had also enjoyed some educational advantages in early life, but these were very limited.

At the time the soldiers were marching to the shipping to sail for America, his father led him forth by the hand to see the troops depart, being then but a small boy. Filled with wonder, he said to his father: "Where are these men going?" "To America," replied his father. Then said little John, "O father! I will go with them!" "Why will you go with them?" asked his father. To which the lad only replied, "Father, I wish to go to America!" This childish desire proved prophetic, and was the germ from which grew most magnificent and blessed results.

It seems that the desire awakened in his young heart by the scene of the departing troops never left him, but grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength. In the month of July, 1797, when he was twenty-six years of age, he set

sail for that new and distant land which had so long floated before him in pleasing visions of hope and desire. It appears, however, that it was not his design to remain in America, but only to visit it—spend perhaps several years here—and then return, with his curiosity satisfied, to his beloved fatherland. But the same Providence which beckoned him hither, even in childhood, kept him here as a man.

He landed at Baltimore. Here he spent some time with an acquaintance, also from Europe, during which time he attended the church of which Mr. Otterbein was pastor, and was greatly benefited by the services.<sup>1</sup> He was not long in the country when he felt himself strongly moved towards the office of the holy ministry. Led by the hand of Providence—for he travelled into the country without any special object in view, and knew not whither he went—he found his way to Chambersburg, Pa., where he became acquainted with the Rev. Philip Stoeck, a European, and a man of much learning, who was at that time pastor there, with whom he commenced the study of theology, 1798.

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<sup>1</sup> “He once stated to me,” says the Rev. Mr. Feete, “that while yet at sea, he dreamed that he was in Baltimore, and saw the city just as he afterwards found it; and, among other things, he saw Mr. Otterbein’s church on the hill, as it then was, into which he entered, and worshipped with the congregation. All the circumstances as he found them when he first visited the church, were just as he saw them in his dream. How similar this to the dream of the Rev. Mr. Hoffmeier, as it will be found mentioned in his life. How mysterious these projections of the spirit in the introverted state of slumber!”

After having pursued his studies one year, he paid a visit to the scattered German Reformed churches and people in the Valley of Virginia; after which he returned to Chambersburg, and continued his studies one year longer. In February, 1799, he paid a second visit to Virginia. Meanwhile, both the desire of the people to enjoy his permanent labors, and his own desire to live and minister among them, grew stronger day by day.

On the 12th of May, 1800, the Synod met in York, Pa., to which he repaired, and presented himself for examination. The examination was conducted by Revs. Wagner, Hendel, and Becker, who reported that Mr. Brown "was qualified for the ministry, and recommended that he be licensed."<sup>1</sup> He was accordingly licensed to preach the gospel.

At the same meeting of Synod there was presented a "request from the congregations in Rockingham County, Va., asking to have Mr. Brown placed over them as pastor." This request was granted; and soon after the meeting of Synod, he returned to Virginia to take charge permanently of the congregations—or, perhaps it were better to say of the missionary field—of the Valley of Virginia. He made the journey to his chosen field of labor on foot. There is an old gentleman yet living in Shenandoah County who remembers well when he came to his father's house, staff in hand. This was truly apostolic; for we read that Paul also was willing to let others go by ships, "minding

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<sup>1</sup> See Minutes of Synod, translated by Dr. Fisher, 1800, p. 26.

himself to go afoot." It is certainly no sin, but a great convenience, to move in more modern style; and yet we cannot help but think that if Mr. Brown had rode into his field in a carriage, he would also ere long have so rode out of it again, instead of enduring hardness, as he did like a good soldier of Christ, in the same field to the end of his long and useful life. It required the self-denying spirit of a man who was neither too tender nor too towering to go on foot, to meet the stern demands of the times. It is said, moreover, that Mr. Wesley was neither as great nor as good a man after he rode in a carriage with a span as he was before. We believe it.

According to the order of the Church at that time, a licensed candidate had to appear before Synod each year to be examined anew, and have his license renewed; and only at the end of three years did he receive ordination. Accordingly, at the meeting of Synod, May 3d, 1801, "Mr. Brown, a licensed candidate, reported in reference to the discharge of his ministerial duties, and gave full satisfaction as to the manner in which he had attended to the various duties incumbent upon him by virtue of the 'Synodal Ordnung.' It was resolved that his license be renewed for another year."<sup>1</sup> He was not present at the meeting of 1802, in Easton; no doubt on account of the great distance; but his license was continued. In 1803, the Synod met in Philadelphia, when he was present and applied for ordination, which was granted;

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<sup>1</sup> See Minutes of Synod, 1801, p. 29.

and he was ordained in the church on Tuesday evening, May 10th, 1803. The solemn services were conducted by a committee of Synod, consisting of Revs. Helfrich, Wagner, and Rahausen.<sup>1</sup>

Previous to the arrival of Mr. Brown in the Valley of Virginia, a great portion of its German Reformed population had been but poorly provided with a regular ministry. There were congregations here and there which existed from a very early time; but they endured long pastorless intervals, and were frequently afflicted by vagabond pretenders, who fleeced and scattered, instead of gathering and feeding, the flocks. The only one preceding Mr. Brown whose labors were extensive and continued through any length of time, was Rev. B. F. Willy. A Rev. Mr. Hoffman also labored at an early day in Rockingham County, of whose life and labors but little is now known.

Thus the labors of Mr. Brown were emphatically those of a missionary. Though he found some congregations existing, and soon organized others, yet they were feeble and scattered. He travelled and preached over the whole of that part of the Valley comprised in the counties of Frederick, Shenandoah, Page, Rockingham, Pendleton, and Augusta. The congregations to which he preached regularly once a month, were Frieden's, St. Michaels' Peaked Mountain, now McGacheysville, and Rader's church, in Rockingham County; Zion's, St. John's, Salem's, and The Branch, in Augusta County. The other counties he visited as often as he could — once or twice a year.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Minutes of Synod, 1803, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. D. Feete.



On these visits to some of the principal points at a distance, he would spend from a month to six weeks preaching the gospel in the pulpit and in private houses; at the same time he would form catechetical classes, and thus gather large numbers of old and young around him, eager to hear the words of divine light and life. "I have heard members of the Church say that they have seen and heard him thus indoctrinate and confirm from sixty to seventy on one of those tours of visitation."<sup>1</sup> It can easily be imagined what a constitution he must have possessed, to be adequate to all this labor, and even to feed the flock of Christ in the Reformed fold over so vast a territory — a territory now occupied by the whole of Virginia Classis, except the Shepherdstown charge. For the long space of thirty-five years, he was the sole ministerial representative of the German Reformed Church in all that extensive and interesting field. In time, others came to his assistance. Still, his field continued large and his labors many till the end of his life.

Dr. Brown's health began gradually to fail during the last three years of his life; but he was able still to perform his ministerial duties, except during the last eighteen months. His disease was chronic bronchitis, which ultimately reached his lungs, and ended at last much like a case of consumption. He was confined to his room about three months, and to his bed about seven weeks. He enjoyed the full use of all his faculties to the last. One of his most

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. J. C. Hensel.

favorite expressions in his last hours was, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." He also frequently said, with much serenity, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." He died calmly and in great peace, at his residence in Bridgewater, Virginia, between three and four o'clock on Saturday afternoon, January 26th, 1850, and was buried, on Monday the 28th, in the graveyard connected with Frieden's church. The Rev. Daniel Feete, and the Rev. Mr. Brown, of the Presbyterian Church, officiated on the solemn occasion. A beautiful marble memorial-stone marks his grave, with the following inscription :

In Memory of  
JOHN BROWN.

Born July 21st, 1771 ;

Died January 26th, 1850.

Aged 78 years, 6 months, and 5 days.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

Laurels may flourish round the conqueror's tomb,  
But happiest they who win the world to come.

In personal appearance, Dr. Brown was tall, well-proportioned, and rather portly. Socially, he was extremely free and affable ; his features were mild and prepossessing. He was extremely simple-hearted and kind, childlike in his spirit, and a great lover of children, who in turn were very fond of him.

Father Brown — for so he was long named by his people, and known in the Church at large — was a man of strong native talent. He was a preacher of no ordinary cast — instructive and impressive. He

generally preached from a very brief skeleton, which, however, never came to the view of the people. "As a preacher," says the Rev. Mr. Feete, "I think there were few that surpassed him. The excellence of his personal appearance, the grace and beauty of his gestures, the pleasantness of his voice, and his deep earnestness and solemn manner, were such as to constitute him a perfect orator. An eminent lawyer, who did not understand a word of German, on one occasion heard him preach, and afterwards remarked that he was amply rewarded; that though he did not understand his language, there was something in his gestures and tones which he both understood and felt." Dr. Brown's ruling desire was to do good to his people. Feeling that, on account of the extent of his field and the multitude of his labors, he could not give them that personal attention which they needed, he also betook himself to the pen, and, in 1818, published a book of over four hundred pages, in the German language, which he addressed to his people, and to the Germans of the Valley in general, as a kind of pastoral letter.<sup>1</sup> In this book many things are discussed calculated both to enlighten and edify the humble Christian. It advocates the extensive distribution of the Bible, and exhibits the good which

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<sup>1</sup> The title of the book is: "Circular-Schreiben an die Deutschen Einwohner von Rockingham und Augusta, und den benachbarten Counties. Erster Band. Von Johannes Braun, Prediger des Evangelii in den Counties Rockingham und Augusta, Virginia. Harrisonburg: Gedruckt bei Laurentz Wartman, Rockingham County, Virginia, 1818."

has been accomplished by Bible societies. It contains much matter on the subject of missions, and gives large translations from the writings of Rev. Buchanan in reference to the state of the Jews and Christians in Syria, and the fearful idolatries of India. It contains also a lengthy discussion on the subject of slavery, in which many sensible things are faithfully said. The book concludes with a thanksgiving sermon, delivered, after the close of the late war, in Salem's church, Augusta County, Virginia, April 13th, 1815 — a day appointed by the President of the United States as a day of general thanksgiving for the restoration of peace. The book is well written, and has proved a source of instruction and comfort to many. The very title of the book speaks volumes concerning the truly pastoral position which Mr. Brown felt himself to occupy in the Valley, and which the nature of the book implies was conceded to him by the people. Feeling as a father, he writes a book for his numerous children, that those who can hear him but seldom, may yet hear him always through this long circular Epistle affectionately addressed to them.

It speaks well for the theological merits of Mr. Brown, and shows the general estimation in which he was held in the Church, that the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by the Board of Trustees of Marshall College. He bore this title as though he had it not. "What do my brethren mean, to confer such an honor upon me so unworthy? They think more highly of me than I deserve." These were his words when it was announced to him.

Dr. Brown's preaching talents were known and appreciated throughout the Church. Proposals and calls were at different times made to him from some of the most prominent and wealthy charges in the Church, and he was earnestly entreated to accept them. He declined them all. He believed that the proverb, "A rolling stone gathers no moss," applied also to the ministry. He came to live and die among his people. He felt that he was married to them in his youthful years, and he had no desire to forsake his first love. "He informed me," says Rev. Mr. Feete, "that he had made a secret and solemn vow, that if the Lord blessed and prospered him among this people, he would never leave them. His ministry among them *was* blessed, and he was true to his vow. With them he lived, among them he died, and his body rests in the cemetery beside the remains of many of his members, over whose graves he read the solemn burial office of the Church. Thus in the field where his ministry commenced, it also ended, having served his congregations half a century."

Dr. Brown was exceedingly mild and affable in his intercourse with his people; and he was especially pleasant and friendly towards those younger brethren in the ministry who had gathered around him in the latter part of his life, to assist him in his labors. He welcomed them into his field, and rejoiced in their labors and success.

If there was one trait in his Christian character more prominent than another, it was attractiveness. There was nothing repulsive about him, either in

his looks, tones, words, actions, or ways. To be in his presence was to feel drawn towards him ; to know was to love him. He was naturally of a cheerful cast ; but his flow of spirits was always moderated by the nicest propriety and the deepest reverence for sacred things.

The tone of his piety was deep, humble, and unostentatious. He was averse to that "fair show" in religion which loves to speak that it may be heard of men, and to do that it may be seen of men. He could not patiently endure that censorious, spiritual pride which professes to discern spirits, loves to "number the people" before the time, and attempts to separate the tares from the wheat before the harvest. A little incident in his life will illustrate this feature in his religious character. At the time when the "Anxious-Bench System" was for a brief season introduced in some churches in the Valley, one who had been "exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations," but had not yet the "thorn in his flesh" to temper, tame, and correct his zeal, said to him :

"Well, Father Brown ; do you think any one has ever been converted by your preaching?"

To which Father Brown replied pleasantly, in his broken English : "Well, I don't know ; but if you will go through my congregations and ask the people, you may perhaps find one here and there who, like the humble Publican, would say, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner !' and you might perhaps also find one here and there who, like the boasting Pharisee, would say, 'God, I thank thee that I am

not as other men!’” This reply was as tender as the touch of an infant’s hand; but at the same time keen and cutting as a sword.

Dr. Brown was a man of strong faith. His faith was especially strong and full of assurance in prayer. He had power to lay firm hold of the Saviour’s promise, “All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, BELIEVING, ye shall receive.” In certain extraordinary straits, he would be seized upon with such an “assured confidence” that his prayer would bring a prompt answer and speedy deliverance, that he prayed without the least lingerings of doubt in his heart; and, on such occasions, his prayers were answered in a wonderful manner. A number of instances of this kind are known to his intimate friends. We must record several of them.

In his last illness, a circumstance occurred which gave him much uneasiness for a time. A neighbor, who had been in the habit of regularly visiting his sick-room, suddenly absented himself for a week. Father Brown felt certain that there was something wrong, and it afflicted him sorely. He believed that the prayer of faith would bring all things right. He turned his face to the wall, and earnestly prayed that God would send that neighbor back to him. Soon after he had ended his prayer, the man was at the door, and soon the trouble was all dispersed.

A few years before his death, his wife was taken with a severe sickness, and seemed to human view at the very borders of the grave. She had resigned herself entirely, and was anxious to depart. One day, Father Brown said to her, “I will pray for your

recovery." She expressed herself unwilling, believing that her end was certainly nigh, and desiring that it might be so. Soon after he made the same proposal a second time, and with renewed earnestness. She did not object. He presented himself before God with the prayer of faith that "saves the sick," and her recovery dated from that hour. Both felt and believed that she came back from the very mouth of the grave in answer to prayer.

The desire to do good was a ruling power in his spirit through life; and it remained still in strong and active exercise after he was confined to his bed in his last sickness. He still bore testimony for his Master faithfully to those who called to see him; and many a living word of exhortation and warning fell from his anointed lips up to the time when death set his seal upon them forever.

During his last illness, he would sometimes ask: "Why am I continued here so long? I am helpless, and only a trouble to my family and others." On one occasion, while speaking in this strain, he suddenly checked himself, and said: "A few days ago a number of persons called to see me, and while speaking to them of my joys, comforts, and hopes in Christ Jesus my Saviour, I saw that they were all bathed in tears. The sight assured me that I was still here for something. I am here for this!" As he had borne testimony to the faithfulness of Christ when health and strength invigorated his body, he felt it a privilege, during his afflictions, to witness to his members, by his own pa-



tience and blessed hope in sufferings, that He who gives us grace to live gives us grace also to die.

Thus, though he had not the privilege — which was to him the greatest of all privileges on earth — to preach Christ and Him crucified in the great congregation, yet in his sick-room he still enjoyed that privilege; and those who visited him can bear testimony how assiduously he availed himself of it, and gave a word of counsel and encouragement to every one. Scarcely anywhere do we see more of the power of heaven upon earth than in the influence of such a man. If the calm and peaceful death of Addison had power to win to the cause of Christ the young man of giddy and infidel habits, may we not believe that the calm resignation and triumphant hope that animated the bosom of this venerable Father did what sermons, logically and doctrinally sound, often fail to do — convince men of the truth and power of Christianity? How well calculated is such an example to cause even a wicked man, as of old, to exclaim: “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”<sup>1</sup>

For some time previous to his departure, Dr. Brown seemed to have come into what Bunyan, in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, calls the land of Beulah, the quiet borders of the King's country, where the air is very pleasant, where the sun shines by night and by day, and where the pilgrims wait a while till called to cross, crying out, in holy love and longing: “If you see my beloved, tell him that I am sick of love.”

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<sup>1</sup>See Rev. Daniel Feete, *Ger. Ref. Mess.*, Feb. 13, 1850.

He himself has given a beautiful illustration of his feelings during the time when he was thus waiting for the chariots of Israel. One of the ministers and elders, on their return from Classis, called to see him.<sup>1</sup> After making many inquiries in reference to the meeting which had just closed, and the state of the Church at large, he said: "My day of service is at an end in the Church militant, and I wait to pass into the Church triumphant. I cannot better represent to you my present state, than by comparing it to a circumstance in my voyage to this country. After having encountered many severe gales and storms, we came at length into Chesapeake Bay. Here again we met with strong, contrary winds and fierce storms, so that we wrought for nine days in sight of the port. Every now and then our old bark would screech and groan as if all were going to pieces, and we should perish in sight of land. But at length the storm abated; there was a pleasant breeze in the right direction, *and we just went right in!* Just so it is with me now. I have crossed the great sea of my life, and my frail bark lies here almost shattered and broken near the celestial shore; but by and by, in the Lord's good time, there will be a favorable breeze towards the port of peace, and then *I will just go right in!*"

When for eternal worlds we steer,  
And seas are calm and skies are clear,  
And faith, in lively exercise,  
Sees distant hills of Canaan rise,

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Rev. J. C. Hensel. See also Ger. Ref. Mess., Feb. 13, 1850.

The soul for joy then claps her wings,  
And loud her heavenly sonnet sings.  
Vain world, adieu.

With cheerful hope her eyes explore  
Each landmark on the distant shore;  
The trees of life, the pastures green,  
The golden streets, the crystal stream:  
Again for joy she claps her wings,  
And loud her heavenly sonnet sings,  
I'm almost home.

The nearer still she draws to land,  
More eager all her powers expand:  
With steady helm and free bent sail,  
Her anchor drops within the veil;  
Again for joy she claps her wings,  
And her celestial sonnet sings,  
I'm safe at home!

## REV. JACOB DIEFFENBACH.

1784 — 1825.

MR. JACOB DIEFFENBACH was born in Virginia, February 27th, A. D. 1784. On Christmas-day, December 25th, 1802, he was confirmed by the Rev. Dr. Brown. He pursued his studies preparatory to the holy ministry at first with Rev. Henry Dieffenbach, an older brother, in North Carolina, and later with Rev. Dr. Becker, in Baltimore, Md.

On the 27th of April, 1807, the Synod met in New Holland, Lancaster County, Pa., at which meeting Mr. Dieffenbach made application for license and ordination. "The question was proposed: 'Shall young Dieffenbach be examined?' which was answered in the affirmative, and the examination ordered to take place this evening."<sup>1</sup> The examination was satisfactory to Synod, and it was ordered that he be ordained during the sessions of that Synod in the church at New Holland. Lewis Mayer also had been examined and his qualifications approved; and accordingly, on the second day of the session, the 28th, he and Mr. Dieffenbach were ordained together, by Revs. Hinch, Herman, and Hoffman, as the committee to conduct the solemnities.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Synod, translated by Dr. Fisher, 1807, p. 43.

Some congregations being vacant at that time near Kutztown, in Berks County, Mr. Dieffenbach was immediately requested by Synod "to visit and preach to those congregations, and to accept of a call from them, in case he and they can come to terms."<sup>1</sup> He went accordingly and took charge of these congregations, living at Linnville. It does not appear that he remained long in this charge — perhaps only a year or part of a year. Some time in the year 1808, he took charge of some congregations in Union County, Pa. He lived in Mifflinburg, then called Youngmanstown, and preached in that place; also at times, if not regularly, in Brush Valley and in Selinsgrove.

About the time he came to Union County, he was married to Lydia Hews, of Selinsgrove. He remained only a short time in this charge. We learn, incidentally from a letter to him from Dr. Becker, of Baltimore, his former preceptor and warm friend, dated October 27th, 1809, that he was not adequately supported, which discouraged him. Dr. Becker, however, while he regrets "that the people do not more gratefully sustain him," encourages him not to leave, but rather extend his field, that his support may meet his necessary wants.

It seems, however, that the "urgent need," which has quietly saddened and discouraged many a faithful pastor's heart, continued to press him. Besides his present wants, he was still in debt for part of his boarding during the time of his studies. For this he felt it his sacred duty to provide. Under

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Synod, 1807, p. 44.

this pressure, he was induced, some time in the year 1810, to leave his present charge. In the synodical Minutes of 1811, we find the following: "Mr. Dieffenbach, Jr., stated that he had left the congregations which he had heretofore served, and had accepted of a call from three congregations which had previously belonged to the charge of Mr. Helfrich, deceased. His course was disapproved of as unconstitutional. As, however, Mr. Dechant stated that he had promised to visit several of these congregations, he was requested to endeavor to persuade them to continue in their former connection, and to receive Mr. Dieffenbach, Jr., as their pastor, at least for one year."

He remained in this field about four years. It appears that on the 8th of August, 1811, he was at Weisenberg, which was one of the places composing his charge, as was also Ziegle's church, on the borders of Macungie, which is mentioned in this connection.

His wife was removed from him by death, July 9th, 1812, and was buried in Linntown; on which occasion a funeral sermon was delivered by Rev. Mr. Diehl, on Lamentations i. 12. She appears to have been a worthy woman. Three children were the fruit of this union—two of which are dead, and one, Samuel Dieffenbach, is still living, and resides near Selinsgrove, in Snyder County, Pa.

He was married a second time, on the 28th of December, 1813, by Rev. Mr. Diehl, a Lutheran minister, to Sarah Andrews, of Bentown, fifteen miles below Mauch Chunk, in Lehigh County,

Pa. Mr. Dieffenbach removed to Bloomsburg in October, 1815. He had been there on a visit a few years previously, at the consecration of the church on the hill in Bloomsburg, which seems to have originated, both with him and the people, the desire that he might be settled in that field as regular pastor.

Mr. Dieffenbach was the first regular German Reformed minister in this place who was of good report, and who labored systematically and zealously for the upbuilding of these congregations. Previously to his arrival, it had been visited now and then by roving theological renegades, whose inconsistent lives soon caused them to lose the confidence of the people. Nothing was effected, except that the few feeble and scattered congregations, then just in their infancy, were made weaker and more desolate by the wounds and the disgrace. The country was yet comparatively new and thinly settled; and the scattered families were without the Word and the Sacraments. At the same time ministers were scarce, and the destitute people thought that it was better to have an indifferent shepherd than none at all. So it would have been, had they got a feeble shepherd; but instead of that they got "ravenous wolves." Better none than such. Yet we may well think charitably of those brethren in the olden time, pressed as they were by a stern necessity, when we remember that in some parts, at least, of that wide field, there are still those who, when the necessity no more exists, seem to have hankering after irregular ministers, preferring them

to those of their own mother church. May we not affectionately address to such the words of Solomon, "Drink water out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. And why wilt thou, my son, embrace the bosom of a stranger?"

Mr. Dieffenbach's new field of labor was long and wide; but he entered upon its cultivation with much holy courage and warm zeal. He was then in the prime of life, and had both the strength and the heart to work. He preached at Bloomsburg, Mahoning, Catawissa, Roaring Creek — east of Catawissa — Brier Creek, Mifflin, and Salem's, in Luzerne County, three miles above Berwick. He organized Heller's congregation, eight miles west of Bloomsburg, which at that time worshipped in a school-house. He also organized a congregation which worshipped in Fisher's school-house, between Catawissa and Mifflin.

He also for some time visited Conyngham during a vacancy there, preaching, and catechizing the children. He likewise preached several years, once a month, at Newport, about five miles south of Wilkesbarre. An aged person still living remembers that on one occasion he confirmed twenty persons, principally youth, in that church at one time. He generally travelled to his appointments over the long and rough road in an old-fashioned gig.

His residence was in Bloomsburg till about the year 1822, when he removed to Espytown, about two miles farther up the North Branch of the Sus-



quehanna, where he had built a stone house in 1816. He was not a healthy man during the last eighteen years of his life. He was much troubled with a settled cough, which at length turned into consumption. He continued; however, weak as he was, to preach till the fall of 1824, when he was confined to his bed to rise no more. He died peacefully, and with a good hope through grace, in the parsonage in Espytown, on the 13th of April, in the year of our Lord 1825, aged 41 years, 1 month, and 16 days. He was buried on the 13th, in the graveyard of the Bloomsburg church, on the hill. A very large concourse of people, and members from all his congregations, were present to follow his remains to their resting-place. A sermon was preached on the solemn occasion by Rev. Mr. Kessler, a Lutheran minister, from the words: "My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me," Job xvii. 1. His grave is a few rods north of the church. Kind nature has mercifully and beautifully covered it with green grass, but those to whom he faithfully ministered for many years have not so gratefully marked the sacred spot with a monumental stone! This last sentence has been written sadly!

His widow still resides in Bloomsburg. By his second marriage he had three children, two of whom are still living.

Mr. Dieffenbach was a man of ordinary natural abilities. He seems to have been an earnest student while preparing himself for the ministry, having left behind him a number of small manuscript

books, containing notes, abridgments of text-books, and exercises in Latin and Greek. He adopted this excellent method in order the more fully to impress upon his memory that which he was studying. We find also among his papers several carefully written analyses of the Heidelberg Catechism, copied and original, which he used as a guide to himself in lecturing to his catechumens.

It does not appear that he was able to keep up his studies with much regularity during the latter half of his active ministry. Not only were his outdoor labors too many to allow him much time for study, but, on account of his scanty support from small and scattered congregations, he was constantly subject to the interruptions of temporal cares. It seems that he even found it necessary to devote part of his time to a secular calling. He had great natural skill in practical mechanics of every kind, which he cultivated from necessity. In this way he gradually became successful in repairing clocks and watches, by which he contributed to his otherwise insufficient support during the latter part of his life.

His devoting in this way part of his time to secular labor, seems to have awakened anxieties in the bosom of his venerable father—who appears from his letters to have been a most excellent man and a warm friend of the Church—lest he might ultimately be allured out of the active duties of the ministry. He expresses his fears in letters of 1816 and 1817, in earnest and solemn words. “I often wonder how you get along with your much labor

—your clock-making and preaching. I hope you will not give up preaching, as Henry has done. I think it is not right, when ministers are so scarce and so much wanted, for those who have been educated for the ministry, to quit preaching. I am troubled that none of you were at Synod, after having been at so many pains to get into connection with Synod. We have had many thoughts in regard to this. I suppose it was your engagement in building that hindered you from attending Synod. I hope for the best.” These are anointed words from a venerable father, who wrote, as he says, “with feeble sight, failing memory, and a heavy hand.” It was a voice of wholesome warning, which he, turning round near the grave, uttered for the good of his sons and the Church. At no time are these words inopportune to ministers, who, while they war for the Church with one hand, are compelled by poverty, like the holy Apostle Paul, with the other to minister to their temporal necessities.

## REV. JONATHAN HELFFENSTEIN.

1784—1829.

“Jeder, der ein redlich Herz Dir brachte,  
 Fand in Dir den deutschen Biedermann,  
 Jedem, der dem David ähnlich dachte,  
 Warst auch Du ein treuer Jonathan.”

VAN DER SLOOT'S ELEGY.

JONATHAN HELFFENSTEIN, third son of Rev. J. C. Albert Helffenstein, was born in Germantown, Pa., Jan. 19th, 1784. Piously inclined from his youth, he early made a public profession of his faith by union with the Church. Feeling himself inwardly and outwardly called to the ministry, he entered upon a course of preparation under the care of Rev. Dr. Becker, of Baltimore. At the Synod of Lancaster, in May, 1805, a request from the congregation at Carlisle was laid before Synod, asking that he might become their pastor. He was examined by a committee of Synod, which “examination resulted altogether satisfactorily,” and he was accordingly licensed to preach the gospel.

He was ordained in 1807, and soon afterwards married to the eldest daughter of Philip Gloninger, Esq., of Lancaster, Pa. He labored successfully at Carlisle till 1811, when he was called to succeed the Rev. Daniel Wagner in the Frederick, Md., charge,

embracing Frederick, Middletown, Glade, Zion, Remsburg school-house, and Manor. In this charge he labored longest and last — up to the time of his death, a period of seventeen years.

In this charge his memory is blessed. “He is mentioned with great kindness by many,” says Rev. Dr. Zacharias, in his Centenary Sermon; “long will his name and memory be fragrant in your families. Justly did those who knew him revere and love him as a man of God, and as a faithful and successful minister of the everlasting gospel. During a period of seventeen years, Mr. Helffenstein continued to minister here with great regularity. In this time the prevalence of the English language suggested to him and the congregation that the time was fully come for the regular introduction of English service, and, in 1825, the Rev. S. Helffenstein, his nephew, was called as co-pastor in this charge to preach in the English language. This young brother labored here, in this capacity, for a year or more, and then, in consequence of ill health, withdrew. The senior pastor still continued until the fall of 1828, when he resigned his charge. Heavy domestic affliction came upon him towards the close of his ministry, in the loss of property. God did to him what he did to Aaron of old — he stripped him of all his property, and then took him home. He was a man of keen sensibilities, and this, added to the want of sympathy which he thought was manifested towards him, hastened, I fear, his death.”

Near the close of his ministry, a peculiar reli-

gious interest was awakened in his congregation at Frederick, of which he gives a very modest and judicious account in the Magazine of the Church, Vol. II., pp. 158, 159. He very prudently makes "the proper distinction between mere excitement and conversion." Similar religious awakenings were experienced at the time in other places; and as a reason for not having earlier reported the fact, he says: "I was anxious to await their result (at least here) in the life and conversation of those who professed to be the subjects of God's converting grace. I have in some measure seen this, and am satisfied; upwards of eighty professors having passed from death unto life. . . . For seventeen years I have had regular catechetical instruction preparatory to the administration of the Lord's Supper, and never have I known these instructions so astonishingly blest as during the present course. The young are in general the subjects."

This was written only a few months before his death. His end drew on. In a sermon, preached on the Sabbath after his funeral, by Rev. David Shaeffer, pastor of the Lutheran church in Frederick City, Md., and for seventeen years his colleague, we have an account of his last hours. The sermon originally appeared in the Evangelical Lutheran Magazine, and afterwards in the form of an "extra," in The Herald, of Frederick, Md.

"At length the fever seized him. I saw him perhaps at the very moment, and advised him to apply means for its removal. He consented, but declared his belief that he would soon be removed

from this world of sin and sorrow. The disease increased in violence daily. Nothing was omitted that was calculated to arrest its progress; but, alas! vain was all medical skill — vain the wishes, the prayers, and tears of his friends and relatives. He saw it. ‘I shall die,’ said he to his brother, the Rev. A. Helffenstein, of Baltimore, and to me, who sat by him. ‘Feel my pulse, and you will agree that my view is correct.’ Yet he conversed freely upon the great subject of religion; and in his last hours dwelt with much emphasis upon the necessity of it, especially when he addressed himself to the members of his family.

“And here it may not be out of place to mention some pious and glowing effusions that fell from his lips in the hearing of a number of persons. It was a day or two before his dissolution, I think, with eyes closed, he exclaimed: ‘O eternity, eternity!’ His brother drew nigh, and inquired whether he was distressed in mind. ‘Leave me to my own reflections,’ was the reply; ‘surely the Judge of the earth will do right!’ Then, after a pause, he expressed his confidence in the atonement, his faith in Christ, and his hope of glory. He was asked, Are you willing to die? ‘Willing, willing, willing!’ he repeated, with great emphasis. ‘Oh, yes; but suppose it should please God to restore you, would you be willing too?’ He replied: ‘Ah! that is a matter I will leave altogether to Him.’ ‘One of two alternatives appears to me,’ said his relative, ‘to be certain — you will either come out of this furnace of affliction doubly refined, or you

are rapidly preparing for glory.' 'Oh, then,' he replied, 'I will sing Glory, glory!' Many more similar effusions were heard, which cannot now be distinctly remembered. It is satisfactory, however, to know, that for several days preceding his dissolution, he appeared to breathe the very soul of religion, seeming to be all love, connecting the simplicity of the child with the sound judgment he possessed during his health."

In a preceding part of his sermon, Rev. D. Shaeffer, in illustration of his text (Heb. xiii. 7), says: "A few days before his dissolution, he remarked to me, 'Brother, faith is everything; go to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, it was faith; come to Jesus Christ and the apostles, it is still faith.' He did not consider faith as consisting in certain tenets engendered in the brain of man, but as 'the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.'"

Again: "Not ten minutes before his spirit left the tenement of clay — when the power of articulation had ceased, when his eyes were closed — I asked him, 'Is Jesus still precious to you?' and, with remarkable exertion, he answered in the affirmative by a nod."

Mr. Helffenstein died Sept. 29th, 1829, in the forty-fourth year of his age. It was the wish of the congregation that his remains should be deposited under the chancel of the church; but his family preferred having them placed in the cemetery. This was done. In 1854, after the death of his wife in Lancaster, Pa., his remains were removed to that



city, where they now repose in the Lancaster cemetery, by the side of his wife and departed children.

On the occasion of his funeral, the bells of all the churches in Frederick City were muffled and tolled, and the church of which he had so long been pastor was deeply draped in mourning. His funeral sermon was preached by his successor, Rev. John H. Smaltz.

Rev. Dr. Johns, then Episcopal minister at Frederick, and now Bishop of Virginia, was his bosom friend. A little before his end, and while the dying man enjoyed a lucid interval, Dr. Johns entered the room. No sooner did his bright eye recognize the approaching form of his much-loved friend than, in the gladness of his heart, he exclaimed: "Johns, dear Johns, come and kiss me. Johns, pray with me." He knelt, and most fervently implored divine grace and blessing upon his friend, whom for the last time he beheld on earth. Some hours after this affecting scene, his brother, Rev. Albert Helffenstein, Sr., closed his eyes, and he was forever at rest.

We here give a beautiful extract from a letter of Bishop Johns, dated March 2d, 1858. "Such is my affectionate remembrance of Rev. Mr. Helffenstein, that, if I felt myself capable of sketching his character so as to express the estimation in which I held him, few things would afford me more pleasure. This, however, I am sure I could not accomplish to my own satisfaction; for though my impressions of his worth are as deep and well defined as in former years, yet the many incidents which

attended our friendly intercourse have become so fused by the lapse of time that I could not now present them for the consideration of others as they occurred, and, of course, must fail to sustain by facts the high commendation which I could not refrain from uttering in words. Besides, those traits which endeared him to his intimate acquaintances and to his people were not of the brilliant and imposing order, but rather retiring, gentle, and affectionate — felt very attractively by those who came within their range, but not easily transferred to paper. And so of his diligent, laborious, and evangelical ministry; — its salutary power was largely experienced by his congregation, though it was marked by none of those novelties in doctrine or of that boldness of execution which occasion general notoriety. No one could listen to his solemn, earnest addresses from the pulpit, or observe his constant and unwearied services from week to week, and by night as well as by day, to the numerous and widely dispersed flock of which he had the oversight, without being assured that his heart was in his work, and that he watched for souls as one who habitually realized that he must give an account. Yet, invaluable as such a ministry is, it yields but little material for worldly popularity. Its reward is on high; and *there* is the eye which looks its approval — *there* the lips which will pronounce the ‘well done, good and faithful servant.’”

Though, in this extract, the good Bishop expresses his inability to sketch his traits of character, yet has he thus only the more touchingly given his

testimony to the excellence of his friend's *severe and* beautiful life.

Mr. Helffenstein's influence was not confined to his immediate charge, but was widely active in the general interests of the Church in his day. He occupied a prominent station at that difficult period of transition when the English language began to be pretty widely introduced into the public services of the Church, whilst at the same time also a movement was made to establish literary and theological institutions. In all the benevolent operations of that day he was particularly active; and especially in the establishment and endowment of the Theological Seminary did he take a very active and decided part. He was a man of most mild and genial manners and warm impulses, which never repelled, but always gave him great influence among his brethren. Although he often advocated favorite measures before Synod with great positiveness and zeal, his warmth became him, and was rightly interpreted. Rev. Van der Sloot, in a poetic elegy, truly says:

“Eifrig sprach er oft für's Recht, beharrlich;  
Und sein Eifer stand ihm doch so schön!”<sup>1</sup>

The following lines on the death of the Rev. Jonathan Helffenstein were sent to his family by an Episcopal clergyman, Dr. Johns, from whom we have already quoted. They appeared in *The Presbyterian* some time after his death. With these, we close our sketch of this excellent man of God.

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<sup>1</sup> This beautiful poem of twenty-four stanzas may be seen in the *Evangelische Magazin*, Vol. I., No. 11, Nov. 1829.

## THE DESERTED CONFERENCE-ROOM.

Ye need not hang that candle by the desk,  
 Ye may remove his chair and take away his book;  
 He will not come to-night. He did not hear the bell  
 Which tolled the hour of prayer. I cannot tell the reason,  
 But he does not seem to love as he did once  
 The conference-room.  
 We have waited long of late, and thought we heard at length  
 His well-known step. We were deceived;  
 He did not come. 'Tis very sad to say,  
 But he will never come again.  
 Do ye remember how he'd sometimes sit  
 In this now vacant corner, quite hid by its obscurity?  
 Only ye might perceive his matchless eye  
 Striving to read the feelings of your souls,  
 That he might know if ye would hear the voice of Jesus.  
 Ye do remember well. He's not there now.  
 Ye may be gay — thoughtless if ye will,  
 His glance shall not reprove you.  
 Or, if ye choose it, ye may slumber on your seats,  
 And never fear the watchman's eye;  
 He weeps not o'er you now.  
 There, listen to the hymn of praise!  
 But how it falters on the lip;  
 How like funeral dirge it sounds.  
 Ah! ye have lost your leader, and ye cannot sing.  
 But hearken! When ye struck that note,  
 Did ye not hear an angel's voice take up the lofty strain,  
 'For Thou, O Lamb of God, art worthy'?"  
 'Twas his voice;  
 Not rising as in former times, from this low temple,  
 (Sing softly, or ye will not hear it,)  
 Only the clearest, softest strain, waving its way  
 From the celestial world, just strikes the listening ear,  
 And now 'tis gone.  
 Ye have not forgotten what he used to say;  
 Or, if ye have, methinks he'd answer,

“Remember, O my people, for the day approaches,  
When ye must remember;  
Accept of mercy while ye may. What shall it profit  
Though you gain the world and lose your souls?”  
And when he would conclude perhaps,  
“A few years hence, and where are we?  
Our bodies mouldering in the tomb;  
Our very names forgotten by the living;  
Our spirits, where are they?”  
O how it chills the heart to think  
That voice is no more heard within these walls!  
It is not fiction, is it? No deluding dream?  
Ah! no. Our friend is gone. He will not wake  
Until he wakes to immortality.  
’Tis sweet to pause and think  
In what a higher world than this his spirit shines;  
How very near he is to Jesus. For sure he must be near  
To Him in heaven, who did so love His name on earth.  
And now he has washed his mortal woes and sins away,  
And now he drinks the consolations of a Saviour’s love,  
And now he tunes his voice to angel themes,  
And now he joins a band, the rapture of whose song  
An angel’s mind can scarce imagine.  
How does he swell the chorus: “Thou wast slain for us,”  
A song not new to him; he had been learning it  
In years gone by.  
But we are not in heaven. We are here  
Where desolation reigns in every eye;  
Soon we must go away, and there is none to ask  
A blessing for us. When we are done praying,  
We shall stand and wait. But none shall say,  
“Now grace be with you.”  
Yet surely we must not repine  
At what He does who made us. He hath done well;  
So be it, rather, even so, since it hath seemed  
Most righteous in Thy sight;  
And if we ask of God a blessing for ourselves,  
If we repent that we have sinned against Him,  
He will not frown upon us. He will hear our prayer.

REV. LEWIS MAYER, D. D.<sup>1</sup>

1783 — 1849.

FEW ministers of the German Reformed Church in this country have occupied so high and commanding a position as Dr. Mayer. The purity and excellence of his private character, his extensive learning and thorough scholarship, his high official station, his activity, earnestness, and fidelity, as well as his long and laborious life, all serve to render his history both interesting and instructive.

Dr. Mayer was born in Lancaster, Pa., March 26th, 1783. He was the son of George L. Mayer by a second marriage. His childhood and youth were spent in his native place. Here he received the first rudiments of his education, and laid the foundation for his future eminence. He is said to have paid special attention to the German language, in which he became quite a proficient. It is doubtless to his extensive knowledge of this, the richest and most profound and philosophical of all the modern languages, that much of his future progress in

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<sup>1</sup> As the author had no Memoir of Dr. Mayer among his papers, we have prepared the above to supply the deficiency. In getting it up, besides embodying our own personal recollections, we consulted the Rev. Dr. Heiner's sketch prefixed to Dr. Mayer's "History of the German Reformed Church." — D. Y. H.

other branches must be ascribed. Through the medium of this language, he became familiar with some of the ripest scholars of modern times, and with their profound productions.

The simple fact of a man of talent and literary taste coming in contact with such men and such productions would be sufficient to stir up the deepest thoughts of his own heart, and spur him up to the highest efforts of which his nature was susceptible. Even if it was not in his power at once to gratify his love of study, the foundation at least of his close and continued application to study, and of his extraordinary success afterwards, was here laid. The erection of a splendid superstructure on such a foundation is not a matter of very great difficulty, when the necessary intellectual elements are at hand.

Dr. Mayer had for a time to suspend his literary pursuits, and give his time and attention mainly to the duties of a secular calling. His business, however, did not seem to suit his taste. His success was by no means such as to inspire him with any special love for the business itself, or of hope for large and tempting pecuniary results.

While thus engaged in the duties of his secular calling, his attention was drawn to a subject of the highest importance. Under the faithful and earnest ministry of the Rev. Daniel Wagner, the excellent and beloved pastor of the German Reformed church in Frederick, Md., where Dr. Mayer then resided, he was awakened to a sense of his sin and guilt. His ardent and active mind was

powerfully moved. His convictions of sin were deep, and his apprehensions of the divine justice keen and overwhelming. The anguish of his soul was great and of long continuance. At length, after much earnest and persevering prayer, he obtained the assurance of peace and pardon. His mind was now calm and full of the divine love.

Soon, however, this state of inward peace and satisfaction was again broken up. The sense of a higher and holier calling than that which brought him "from darkness to light," began to fill his heart. It cost him a severe and protracted struggle to come to a decision. His honest and earnest soul would not permit him to be either hasty or superficial in his inquiry as to what was his duty in the case. At last this question also was satisfactorily solved. His mind was fully made up. He must serve his Master in the work of the ministry. Such was his calling: such was his determination.

With a view of preparing himself for this sacred office, he commenced a course of study, literary and theological—the former at the college in Frederick, Md.; the other under the tuition of his excellent and able pastor, the Rev. Daniel Wagner. His previous studies, and the native vigor of his well-balanced mind, rendered the study of these branches easy, and his progress rapid. Having finished his course, he applied for examination, licensure, and ordination at the Synod of the German Reformed Church which met at New Holland, Lancaster County, Pa., in 1807. His examination proved satisfactory, and he was accordingly licensed to preach



the gospel, and ordained.<sup>1</sup> For a short time subsequent to his licensure, he remained in the place of his former residence. In the year following, 1808, he received and accepted a call from the German Reformed congregations in and around Shepherds-town, Va. He entered immediately upon the duties of his office; and labored earnestly and faithfully, and with remarkable success, in this extensive and laborious field. Many were the seals to his ministry. His name and memory are still held in grateful remembrance. Although he received several tempting calls while in this field, he declined them all, preferring to remain in his first charge, and labor among the people of his first love. His course was both wise and praiseworthy.

When, in the year 1821, a call was extended to him by the Reformed church in York, Pa., he thought it his duty to accept the same, and accordingly removed with his family to this place. Here he labored faithfully and efficiently for the space of four years, up to 1825, when he was called to take charge of the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church lately established in Carlisle, Pa. For this important and highly responsible post he was eminently fitted, both by nature and by reason of his literary and theological training. He presided over the Seminary with much acceptance and success during its continuance in Carlisle, and after it was removed to York in 1829. Here the Seminary greatly prospered under his able and judicious presidency. The number of students in-

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<sup>1</sup> Syn. Min., 1807, pp. 43, 44.

creased largely. The teaching force of the Seminary was also enlarged by the addition of another professor, in the person of the Rev. Daniel Young, an accomplished scholar and devoted Christian. At this time, also, there was established, in connection with the Seminary, the High-School, under the able and efficient presidency of Dr. Fred'k Aug. Rauch, who, after the death of Mr. Young, was also chosen to fill his place in the Seminary.

When, in 1835, the High-School, which was now, by a charter of the State of Pennsylvania, changed into Marshall College, and the Theological Seminary, were removed to Mercersburg, Franklin County, Pa., Dr. Mayer resigned his professorship, not choosing to follow the same to its new home. But being subsequently urged by the Synod to take charge of the Seminary, he consented to do so temporarily, and accordingly removed with his family to Mercersburg. This second connection of Dr. Mayer with the Seminary was not so pleasant as could have been wished. Some serious difficulties occurred. These, together with his increasing infirmities, induced him to hand in his resignation at the meeting of the General Synod in Philadelphia, the following year; and the same being accepted, he returned with his family to York again, where, up to the time of his death, he lived in peaceful retirement, devoting his leisure hours to theological and literary pursuits.

As a man and a Christian, Dr. Mayer sustained a very high character. He was always gentlemanly and polite in his intercourse with others, generous

and noble-hearted, courteous and obliging in his manners, and ever ready to speak a kindly word to such as sought the benefit of his counsel. Our own personal recollections of him are all of the most pleasant character.

As a preacher and pastor, he had few equals. His sermons were always prepared with the utmost care, and exhibited a degree of thoroughness and polish rarely excelled. His aim at accuracy of expression was extreme. Every word and phrase and sentence had to be shaped to the best of his ability. His matter also was equally as good and as carefully arranged as the language in which it was expressed. His style was perfect, so far as form was concerned. His unusual care in this respect may sometimes have given a somewhat stiff and formal aspect to his compositions. His preaching, however, was always clear, able, and earnest. In his pastoral labors, he is said to have been very happy and successful. Indeed, everything connected with his ministry bears testimony to his efficiency in this respect. The people of his several charges highly appreciated his labors, and remember him even yet with the kindest feelings and sentiments of the warmest gratitude.

As a theologian and professor, Dr. Mayer occupied a prominent place in his day. With the systems of thought then current he was perfectly familiar. Whatever we may think of the theological ideas prevalent in the beginning of this century, we must admit at least the intellectual power and moral earnestness of him who could thoroughly

master those ideas and make them his own. This Dr. Mayer could and did do. He was familiar with the whole range of theological thought as it was current in his day. His labors in the Seminary, which extended over a period of thirteen years, were thorough, earnest, and efficient. His keen and logical mind enabled him to present whatever subject he undertook to handle in the clearest and strongest light. His knowledge was acquired, to a very great extent, by his own private efforts, and hence he was perfectly master of whatever he possessed. These rich stores of theological learning he could use, whether in the pulpit or in the professorial chair, to the very best advantage.

Dr. Mayer is said to have been a distinguished classical scholar. His knowledge of the ancient languages is represented as having been extensive and accurate. He was, I believe, a very superior Hebrew scholar. Such is the general impression among those who were students under him. His attainments, classical and theological, elicited their highest admiration. They all speak of him as a ripe scholar. His power of analysis was enormous. He possessed accordingly great aptness in the exposition of Scripture. Many of his sermons were of an expository character. In this kind of preaching he excelled; and the same peculiarity of mind which fitted him for ready exposition, also qualified him for the duties of the Professor. "His mind was peculiarly adapted to the study of biblical antiquities, hermeneutics, exegesis, and didactic, polemic, and pastoral theology. In these studies he excelled

—particularly in theology. Possessing a thoroughly disciplined and accurate mind, and being apparently at home in every department of the Holy Scriptures,—conversant with the various scopes of the sacred authors, and the meaning to be attached to the words they used,—it was comparatively an easy thing for him to dictate a good skeleton from the impulse of the occasion.”

As an author, Dr. Mayer is not so widely known. He wrote, indeed, many able and interesting articles for the various Church periodicals, and also a somewhat remarkable essay on “The Sin against the Holy Ghost.” Shortly before his death, he published a small volume of “Lectures on Scriptural Subjects.” Subsequently, the first volume of his “History of the German Reformed Church” was published by his former student and admirer—Dr. Heiner. Other important manuscripts are said to be among the papers which he left behind, but it is not very likely that any of these will ever be published.

Taken all together, Dr. Mayer was a very remarkable man. Few men of his time could lay claim to as many excellencies as were found united in his person. His private character, as we have seen, was beyond reproach. “He was indeed remarkable for his correct Christian deportment, and for his holy walk and conversation. Religion with him was not a mere name; it entered deeply into all his thoughts and feelings, subdued and controlled his will, swayed his judgment, and gave tone and character to all his words and actions. His piety

was of a serious, modest, retiring character, — yet withal it was earnest and decided.” This high encomium, by one of his most ardent admirers, is not a particle too high. Every word of it is strictly true. Dr. Mayer was undoubtedly a model man in this respect. No one could ever see him without feeling that he was in the presence of a good and great man. He was eminently a pious, earnest, devoted Christian. In respect to the more public interests of God’s kingdom, and of the German Reformed Church in particular, he stood equally high. All the benevolent and charitable enterprises of the Church he loved and encouraged. Especially deserving of notice is his zeal in the cause of education. He was among the prime movers of our educational interests. The Theological Seminary owes its establishment and early success largely to his personal efforts and influence. He was present in Synod when the project of establishing a theological school was started; and from that period onward, to the end of his life, Dr. Mayer ever cherished for it the warmest love, and devoted to its growth and prosperity his best energies and efforts. Even after his retirement from public life, he still continued to take the deepest interest in whatever concerned the welfare and prosperity of the German Reformed Church.

“As to his personal appearance, Dr. Mayer was of medium size.” His frame was feeble, slender, and erect; his countenance open, pleasant, and expressive of deep, earnest, and anxious thought; his forehead high and massive, indicating great intel-

lectual strength; his eye was remarkably keen and penetrating; and his whole appearance commanded the highest respect and reverence. His utterance was easy, but at times rather slow, and even stiff and tedious. He was very regular in his habits, and remarkably systematic and precise in what he did. He was pre-eminently a man of order, and observed great regularity in all his business transactions.

Dr. Mayer's physical constitution differed widely from that of his intellect. He was more than ordinarily feeble; and his physical debility often interfered more or less with the discharge of his duties. Even in early life his frame was not at all strong, nor his health vigorous. This natural weakness increased with advancing years. For some time previous to his death, his general health was bad, and greatly interfered with his favorite theological and literary pursuits.

"During the summer of 1849, the dysentery prevailed in York," where he then resided; and among those who suffered from its ravages was the subject of this Memoir. His disease from the very start assumed a dangerous form, and left but little hope of his recovery. He sank rapidly under the influence of this fatal malady. Neither the kindness and attention of friends, nor the skill and assiduity of his physicians, could stay the progress of the disease. "He died, surrounded by his friends and family, on the 25th of August, 1849, aged 66 years, 4 months, and 29 days. On Monday afternoon, August 27th, his remains were followed to

the grave by a large concourse of people, and were interred in the cemetery adjoining the Reformed church in York, and near the grave of the lamented Cares." A funeral discourse was delivered on this solemn occasion by the Rev. Dr. Elias Heiner, of Baltimore, Md., his former pupil, friend, and admirer.

The great and good man sleeps sweetly among the sainted dead that lie buried in that consecrated spot, with them and the holy church Catholic to await "the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting in the world to come."



## REV. PHILIP GLONINGER.

1788 — 1816.

THIS excellent young man, and able, earnest, and devoted minister of Christ, was the son of the Hon. John Gloninger and Catharine, his wife. The father was a distinguished man in his day, — a judge of the court, and representative in Congress from his district in 1812.<sup>1</sup>

Philip Gloninger was born in Lebanon, Lebanon County, Pa., February 17th, 1788. He was baptized in early infancy by the Rev. Ludwig Lupp, then pastor of the place; an account of whose life and ministry is given in another part of this Work.<sup>2</sup> After being duly instructed in the doctrines and precepts of our holy religion, he was confirmed, in May, 1804, by the Rev. William Hiester, who, from 1786 to 1798, was the esteemed and efficient pastor of the Lebanon charge.<sup>3</sup> Having acquired such an education as the school facilities of his native place then afforded, he entered Dickinson College, at

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by the Editor. The main facts of this sketch were kindly furnished by the Rev. Dr. Johnston, who obtained them from his brother, the venerable Dr. John Gloninger.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II., pp. 351-355.

<sup>3</sup> See Vol. III. of this Work, pp. 92-103.

Carlisle, Pa., where he early completed his literary course. "He was remarkably studious;" and, being a youth of extraordinary talents, his progress, we may safely presume, was correspondingly rapid and praiseworthy. Subsequently, he studied divinity under the Rev. C. L. Becker, D. D., of Baltimore, — one of the most distinguished theologians and pulpit orators of the age. A full account of his life and ministry will be found in another part of this Work.<sup>1</sup>

At the meeting of Synod held in Germantown, Pa., in the autumn of 1808, Mr. Gloninger was present, and presented a call from the German Reformed church in Harrisburg, Pa., with the request that he be "placed over them as their pastor." Along with four other young men, he was referred to a special committee, to be examined that evening, Monday, May 16th. On the following day, the committee reported "that the young gentlemen sustained a perfectly satisfactory examination." In connection with this report, it was resolved "that these young men be ordained this (Tuesday) evening." The committee of ordination consisted of Messrs. Faber, Geistweit, and Hoffmeier.<sup>2</sup>

In looking over the Minutes of Synod, we find that he was always present at its meetings as long as his health permitted him to be there. In 1811, a call was tendered him by the Reformed congregation of Frederick, Md. This call came before Synod, together with a communication from the church at Harrisburg, "requesting that Mr. Glon-

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. III., pp. 65-71.

<sup>2</sup> Syn. Min., 1808, pp. 45, 46.

inger be continued as their pastor." The Fathers say, that, inasmuch as "Mr. Gloninger has decided to remain in his present congregations, the attention of the delegate from Fredericktown be directed to the resolution adopted at the last annual meeting in relation to that congregation."<sup>1</sup>

From the action of Synod just noticed, it appears that the Harrisburg charge, at this time, consisted of other congregations besides that in town. Two years later, we find him reporting five congregations embraced in his charge, with six hundred and eighty-eight communicants; baptisms, two hundred and eighty-nine; and ninety confirmations. It is probable that these last figures, in reference to baptisms and confirmations, extend over several years, as it is not likely that so many could have been confirmed and baptized in one year. The congregations affiliated with that in Harrisburg — though not reported — were, to our personal knowledge, the following: Middletown, Schupp's, Wenrich's, and Hummelstown; the place of this last may perhaps have been occupied by "Schnebly's," in Cumberland County, as this appears in that connection, afterwards, on the Minutes of Synod.<sup>2</sup>

The Synod showed its high appreciation of the character and standing of Mr. Gloninger by appointing him as one of the *first* two delegates sent to the Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church, with which this particular form of correspondence was just then being inaugurated.<sup>3</sup> The following year,

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<sup>1</sup>Syn. Min., 1811, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup>Syn. Min., 1819, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup>Syn. Min., 1813, p. 58.

1814, the committee reported "that the duty assigned them was not attended to in consequence of the sickness of Mr. Gloninger." On this account, also, he was, at this very meeting, absent for the first time during his ministry, and excused on this ground. After the opening of the third session, a letter from him, addressed to the Synod, was read. In reference to this, we have the following significant record: "Mr. Gloninger complains therein very much of bodily infirmities; and requests that, in case he should be obliged, on account of these infirmities, to resign his pastoral charge, and the congregation he serves should call another minister belonging to Synod, the said minister be permitted to accept the call." It was resolved that the request of the brother be granted, and his wishes, in the case, gratified, should the sad contingency arise.<sup>1</sup>

At the meeting of Synod in 1815, Mr. Gloninger was again absent, and doubtless for the same reason. His absence was excused. By this time, his health had become very bad; and, as we shall see, soon terminated fatally. In the autumn of 1816, the Synod held its sessions in New Holland, Lancaster County, Pa. This was just eight years after Mr. Gloninger was licensed to preach the gospel, and ordained to the office and work of the holy ministry. He had faithfully labored, and was truly "accounted" as *one* "of the servants of Christ" and of the "stewards of the mysteries of God." He was present at this meeting. It was the last

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<sup>1</sup> Syn. Min., 1814, pp. 61, 63.

one he ever attended. He had some time previously contracted a bad cold, through exposure, by wading the Swatara, in order to reach the place of one of his appointments. This finally "developed into consumption." After attending the sessions of Synod,<sup>1</sup> he "returned to Lebanon," where he died, Sept. 10th, 1816, aged 28 years, 6 months, and 23 days. He is buried in the cemetery attached to the German Reformed church in Lebanon, Pa.

In the year 1810, two years after entering the ministry, he was married to Miss Eliza Clark. They had no children. She survived him, and was subsequently married again.

Mr. Gloninger was evidently a man of superior pulpit talents. Naturally gifted, and reared under circumstances highly favorable to the development of his moral and intellectual endowments, he became distinguished as a preacher of righteousness, and early attained a prominent position among his ministerial brethren. This fact appears from the respect shown him in the sessions of Synod, and from many other little circumstances connected with his brief but brilliant career. "He was earnest and zealous," says Dr. Johnston,<sup>2</sup> speaking of his ministry; and then proceeds: "I have seen many of his sermons, which show that he was a fine sermonizer—logical, clear, and pointed. He was evidently a powerful preacher, a faithful pastor, a good catechist, and much esteemed. His private life was

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<sup>1</sup> Syn. Min., 1816, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> In a letter, dated January 22, 1872.

characterized by deep piety; and, for many years, a sweet savor lingered in the memory of the Fathers, who are now nearly all numbered with the dead. I have had the opportunity of examining much of the correspondence of Mr. Gloninger, and find that his life, though short, was eventful, and that his praise was in all the churches."

During our own ministry in a part of the field once occupied by Mr. Gloninger, we heard enough to confirm all that is here spoken in his praise. Some few of the quite old members still remembered him well, and spoke of him in terms of the highest and most affectionate regard. Truly, his "name," in that region, is "like ointment poured forth;" and his earnest ministry and pious deeds are held in grateful remembrance.

In order to complete our imperfect sketch, we here add yet the following interesting statistics of Mr. Gloninger's ministry, kindly furnished us by our friend, R. F. Kelker, Esq., of Harrisburg, Pa., who, at the instance of the Rev. W. H. H. Snyder, carefully transcribed them from the records of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

"In his own handwriting," says Mr. Kelker, in some preliminary remarks, "it is recorded that he began his pastorate of the Evangelical Reformed church in Harrisburg on the 17th day of July, 1808, and ceased his labors here on the 26th of June, 1814." It is suggested that he "officiated at intervals" previous to the time here indicated,

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<sup>1</sup>Some of these statistics, such as marriages and funerals, perhaps embrace the whole charge; the rest refer exclusively to the church in Harrisburg.

“because there are baptisms recorded in his handwriting.” These records were probably made during his visits as candidate, and most likely to make up for the neglect of others; as the dates of birth, in the case of the children, and the absence of dates as regards the baptisms themselves, would seem to indicate. His ordination took place only a few months previously—in May, and he was then only a little over twenty years of age. In fact, only those of June 2d and June 10th could possibly have been administered by him, since all the others took place previous to his ordination, when he had no *right* to administer the sacraments.

“In all, he has recorded 293 baptisms, in a clear, distinct, and beautiful handwriting — German.” He has it recorded also that he held his “Eintritts Predigt” in Harrisburg, July 17th, 1808, to which is added: “Zum ersten mal Englisch gepredigt in Harrisburg, den 23ten Februarius, 1812.”

“He records 82 funerals, with special memoranda in each case; 200 marriages; confirmed, in all, 89. At his first communion, 41 old members, with 30 others just confirmed, communed — making, in all, 71 communicants. At his last communion, he confirmed 17 persons, and administered the Sacrament to them and 117 others; so that he then had 134 communicant members over against the 41 who, besides those just confirmed by him, communed when he first came.”

These facts show the extraordinary success which attended his ministry; and confirm the statements previously made in reference to his superior talents,

extensive acquirements, deep piety, earnestness, and efficiency as a minister of the gospel. It is pleasant to contemplate a life which, though short, and marred by physical infirmities, was yet so fruitful of good results.

“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”



## REV. JACOB WILLIAM DECHANT.

1784 — 1832.

JACOB WILLIAM DECHANT was born at Kreutznach, in the Palatinate, on the 18th of February, 1784.<sup>1</sup> He was the son of John Peter Dechant and his wife Jacobina, whose maiden name was Wallauer. It may be remarked that both his paternal and maternal grandfathers were ministers of the gospel. He also had an uncle — Wallauer — who was clothed with the same blessed office. It is said that this latter had emigrated to America in the time of the War of Independence; but afterwards returned to his native country for reasons unknown. Mr. Dechant emigrated to this country in 1805, and landed in Baltimore, in which place, after the lapse of about one year, he began the prosecution of his theological studies under Rev. Christian L. Becker, D. D.; having completed them, he was licensed and ordained in 1808.<sup>2</sup> On the 25th of October of the same year, he was united in the bonds of holy wedlock with Miss Maria Rebecca Andre, who sailed from Bremen, her native city, in the year 1805.

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<sup>1</sup> This sketch, slightly changed, was prepared by Rev. William H. Groh.

<sup>2</sup> Syn. Min., 1808, p. 46; 1809, p. 47.

They were strangers to each other until Dr. Becker, ■ relative of the Andre family, introduced them to one another. The first pastoral charge which he served was in Lehigh County, Pa., and consisted of the following congregations, viz., Springfield, Nacomixon, Upper Milford, Trexlertown, Longswamp, and Upper Saucon. Here he labored with considerable success until the year 1815, when he was sent to the State of Ohio, by the Synod, as a missionary, in which capacity he labored about three years and a half, when he returned again to Pennsylvania. His widow, who is still living, and resides in Lykens Valley, says that he came to this State about that time to attend the meeting of Synod; and while here, his ministerial brethren prevailed on him to come East again; after which he received and accepted a call from the following congregations, viz., Limerick, Oley, and Old Goshenhoppen. It appears he did not return to the West after this meeting of Synod. He sent for his family, which came; but, for some reason or other, his library and papers were left behind, and he never obtained them again. The family knows not what has become of them.

In this last charge he labored with acceptance and good success up to the time of his death. The circumstances under which his death occurred are peculiarly painful. He had left his family in order to attend the annual meeting of Synod at Frederick, Md.; and, after Synod adjourned, on his way home, he was seized by an attack of cholera, and laid up at the public house of Mr. John Forney,

about nine miles from Lancaster, on the Reading road. He was taken with premonitory symptoms of cholera, previous to his departure from Frederick, on the morning of September 22d; but confiding too much in a partial relief and an excellent constitution, and anxious to return to his family, he imprudently set out on the same day. After much suffering on the way, he arrived at the house of Mr. Forney on the evening of the 25th, where his further progress was arrested. A physician was called in, and the disease was checked, but not permanently. After suffering here for about eleven days, he breathed his last on the night of October 5th, 1832. His wife and his son Frederick came to attend to him about five days before his death. The Rev. Daniel Hertz, residing in the neighborhood, visited the sick man frequently. He says: "I never saw any one bear affliction so patiently and resignedly as he. He died like a true Christian." He was rational to the last, and in prayer commended himself to the Lord Jesus. His remains were taken to Oley, Berks County, Pa., where they were interred in the graveyard near by the Oley church. Rev. Jacob Miller, of the Lutheran Church, preached a funeral sermon on the occasion from Luke ii. 29.

Mr. Dechant died poor, and his family—the widow with ten children, one of whom followed its father into eternity not long after—were left in a destitute condition. Yet the God of the widow and orphan has provided all things needful for her and all the children. "With tears of gratitude,"

says Rev. Mr. Groh, "she said to me, 'Der liebe Gott hat uns immer versorgt — wir haben nie Mangel gehabt.'"

In spite of his wishes to the contrary, there are now three of his sons in the ministry. He wished them to become mechanics, because the ministry in this country was not esteemed as highly and supported as well as it should be. He had undergone a great many privations, and he did not wish his sons to do the same. The complaint is but too just; yet all this must be endured for Christ's sake.

Mr. Dechant was kind and benevolent — perhaps to excess — at least, he does not seem to have made much account of the adage, "Charity begins at home." If he had two coats, he would "give to him who had none." He was always easily reconciled with his enemies; he forgave them, and showed them all kindness. As a preacher, he was popular, and generally beloved by the people. He was very talented and always a ready speaker. His gifts perhaps proved a snare to him. It is said he never studied much — at most, perhaps, as he rode along from one preaching-point to another, or as he was about to enter the pulpit, did he collect his thoughts. He was possessed of good conversational powers. In his intercourse with the people, he was lively and "full of talk." He would frequently stop on the road to converse with those he met; and this would sometimes happen when he was on his way to fill an appointment, and forgetting himself, he would come too late — often enough, at least, to occasion a complaint on the part of the people.

It appears that he was a little credulous, and thus was exposed to imposition from others. "Allen Menschen hat er geglaubt" is said of him.

He enjoyed a good training preparatory to the study of theology, before he left his native country. Where he was educated is not known. The following persons, it is said, studied theology under him, viz., Theo. L. Hoffeditz, Samuel Stähr, C. Aug. Pauli, J. W. Hangen, F. W. Bindeman, H. Bassler, D. Riegel, John Gring, and A. M. Lechner.

## REV. JOHN DIETRICH AURANDT.

1760 — 1831.

JOHN AURANDT, the father of the Rev. John Dietrich Aurandt, was born at Strass Ebersbach, near Heidelberg, in Germany, Sept. 25, 1725. His ancestors were originally French. They were driven into Holland by the well-known religious persecutions of that period, and at last removed to the neighborhood of Heidelberg. He continued to live in his native place till he emigrated to America, in the year 1751.

He had seven sons, four of whom, namely, John Yost, John Henry, John Daniel, and John Jacob, were born in Europe. In this country were born John, who died in 1771; Jonathan Yost, who died in 1760; and John Dietrich, the subject of this memoir.

When John Aurandt arrived in this country, he settled first at Maiden Creek. Here John Dietrich Aurandt, the seventh son, and the minister, was born on the 8th day of November, in the year of our Lord 1760. From this place his father shortly after removed to Tulpehocken, where he purchased a farm, on which he resided with his family for some time. Having a chance of selling his farm at a great profit, he disposed of it, and removed to the

mouth of Turtle Creek, on the Susquehanna River, in what was then Northumberland, but is now Union County, Pa.

Here he built a saw-mill and a flouring-mill, from which he, previous to the Revolutionary war, supplied both the Indians and the thinly scattered white inhabitants of that region with breadstuff. Here young John Dietrich, now verging towards ripe youth, was put into the mill to aid the miller and learn that trade. Meanwhile, the struggle of the Colonies for freedom having begun in good earnest, our youth, feeling the motions of patriotic blood within him, enlisted in 1778, being only in the eighteenth year of his age, and marched forth in the regiment of Colonel Stewart, and in the brigade of Pennsylvania Regulars under General Anthony Wayne. Before the expiration of the term for which he had enlisted, his father went to the army and made an effort to secure his release, on the ground of his minority; but he declined returning, preferring to serve his country in her severe need and sharp conflicts with the enemy. He remained in the army till the beginning of the year 1781, when occurred that extremely sad event, namely, the revolt of the whole Pennsylvania line of troops under General Wayne, at Morristown, to the number of one thousand three hundred — the occasion of which was, want of pay, of clothing, and provisions, and the detention of a majority of the troops after their time of enlistment had expired. "Upon an examination of the grievances of the troops, by a committee of Congress, their com-

plaints were considered to be founded in justice."<sup>1</sup> They were properly redressed, when those whose time had not expired cheerfully returned to duty, while the rest repaired to their homes. At this time young John Dietrich, having served his time of enlistment, received an honorable discharge from the army, and returned to his father's house on Turtle Creek, after he had faithfully served his country upwards of two years in the darkest period of the war.

When he returned to his home, his mother was no more. She had died a short time before his return, amid the tenderest longings to see her son once more before her spirit departed hence. This deeply affected him. The remembrance of her kindness and love seemed to hover before his vision by day, and crowded into his dreams at night. She was buried on a gentle knoll on the west side of the present road, and on the south side of Turtle Creek, near the mouth of the stream, under an aged yellow pine in the midst of a clump of beautiful white pines of smaller growth. The deep sadness which had taken possession of the young soldier's spirit, when he returned and found his beloved mother no more among the living, seemed to abide with him and press him sorely. He often went to her grave in the solitude of his sorrow. On the occasion of one of these visits, he was so overcome by a sense of his bereavement, and so intensely drawn by a desire again to behold his mother, that he sunk upon his knees beside her grave, and

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<sup>1</sup> Goodrich's History of United States, p. 166.



poured out his tears and his prayers earnestly and long. His weeping and entreating on this occasion were as much for himself as on account of his beloved dead. He continued, till, in a state of exhaustion, with a *cold shudder* and in a kind of trance, he sunk upon the tomb of his departed parent in a state of insensibility. Having recovered from his swoon, he bade adieu to his mother's grave, and returned to it no more. The death of his mother seems to have been the occasion of bringing his mind into a state of abiding seriousness, and from this time forward the current of his life took a decidedly religious course.

Shortly after this, in 1783, being in the twenty-third year of his age, he was married, by Dr. Hendel, the elder, to Miss Catharine Reiber, eldest daughter of Peter Reiber, who lived near Jonestown, in Lebanon County, Pa. Having now a family to support, he began to turn to account his knowledge of the milling business. He first took charge of Weaver's mill, on Yellow Breeches Creek, in York County. After some time, he removed into Dauphin County, and was employed in the mill of Mr. Joshua Elder, two miles northeast of Harrisburg; and still later, he entered the mill of Mr. Christian Overs, two miles east of Harrisburg, on the Middletown road, from which place, in 1794, he removed with his family to Buffalo Valley, then Northumberland, but now Union County, and settled on a farm on Turtle Creek, about midway between its source and its outlet into the river, and about five miles above his father's

mill. Here he was engaged as a practical farmer. This farm had a reserved water-right on it, and it was given to him by his father with the design that he should build a merchant-mill on it, which he also intended to do. But the Hessian fly having proved very destructive to the wheat crops for upwards of ten years in succession, and he having sustained severe losses in the purchase of wheat for the French during the war of that nation, as also by becoming surety for others who failed, he not only found it necessary to relinquish the idea of building the mill, but found himself compelled to part with his farm to meet the just claims against him. Accordingly, the farm having been sold, in 1801 he removed to an adjoining farm, belonging to his father, where he continued three years longer as a practical farmer.

Meanwhile, ever since his mother's death, his mind had been much engaged on the subject of religion; and of late his attention began to be strongly turned towards the holy ministry. About the year 1798, he began to be fond of attending what were then called "Big Meetings,"<sup>1</sup> conducted by such men as Otterbein, Newcomer, Boehme, Gueting, Neidig, Hershey, and, especially in that region, by George Pfruemer—generally called Frömmer—who were carrying forward a religious movement which afterwards grew into the sect of "The United Brethren in Christ." At these meetings he was made prominent by the preachers, who called on him to lead in public prayer, which he did. He

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<sup>1</sup> Grosse Versammlungen.

was also soon invited to sit on the stand with the ministers, and asked to take part in exhortation. He was also frequently visited at his own house by these preachers, some of them "aged patriarchs, who had flowing white beards; they would meet him with a kiss, retire to some private place, and commune with one another on subjects divine."<sup>1</sup> At this time he had not yet become a member of any branch of the Church, nor did he do so for some years later.

About the year 1800, one of these preachers, Rev. George Pfruemer, had a kind of irregular charge of the German Reformed church at Dreisbach's, in Buffalo Valley. He also made visits to preach, and catechize children in Penn's and Brush Valleys. On these occasions he would frequently be accompanied by Mr. Aurandt, who assisted him. Thus, though in an irregular way, which was no doubt more owing to the times and circumstances than to him, was he gradually undergoing a certain kind of preparation for the ministry.

It was about this time, that, under somewhat singular circumstances, he was induced to preach what may be called his first sermon; for, though he had frequently exhorted at meetings conducted by

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<sup>1</sup> Of such as occasionally visited his house are yet remembered Neidig, Hershey, David Schnyder, and Christian Newcomer, Brethren preachers; also John Walters, Mr. Lieser, and even Jacob Albright himself, founder of the Evangelical Association. These facts we have learned from John Aurandt, Esq., of Yellow Springs, Blair County, who remembers this well. To him are we also indebted for the greater part of the facts pertaining to the life of his venerable father.

others, he had never conducted a service himself alone. It happened on this wise. One day, being in the field, on his farm, on an elevated flat where stood a large and only yellow-pine tree, a stranger came earnestly walking over the ploughed ground, and met him near that tree. The stranger requested him, with much importunity, to come on the next day and preach a funeral sermon at the burial of his deceased child. This was a strange request to him, and he earnestly besought the man to excuse him from attending to such a solemn duty; but the man continued his importunities, when at length Mr. Aurandt promised to be there and speak something on the occasion, but not to preach. He accordingly attended. Many persons were there, eager to hear, "for the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was not much open vision." With great diffidence, he began to address the assembly; but as he proceeded, thoughts suited to the mournful occasion crowded in upon his mind; his speech was easy, and his words to the purpose; and the result was that he delivered a deeply impressive and much admired funeral sermon.

Soon after this he received a kind of license from the band of preachers who conducted these "Big Meetings," and continued to exhort as occasion offered. Finding, however, that their mode of worship differed so materially from that of the German Reformed Church, to which his ancestors had belonged ever since the Reformation, and his education and preferences being in the same way, he

gradually withdrew from the Brethren. Still, he earnestly continued his labors of public exhortation, occupying for the time a kind of abnormal position.

The Buffalo church, now called Dreisbach's, in Buffalo Valley, had for some time been in a very distracted condition, having only the irregular attentions of the irregular Pfruemer; but was for the most part closed entirely. The young were growing up without adequate spiritual instruction, and the old members, having passed through scenes of strife, had grown to a great degree indifferent. Seeing, however, at length, that religious matters were tending in a bad way, they awoke, and saw that something must be done. Reformed ministers being at that time few, and difficult to be secured, they thought they saw in Mr. Aurandt, who was still on his farm, a man who could be useful among them as a Reformed minister. It was about the beginning of the year 1801 that they came together, and unanimously and very cordially agreed to call upon him to preach a sermon in that church, which he consented to do. The appointment was made. The day arrived. The people assembled in great numbers. The pews, the galleries, the aisles, the doors, the lower windows, and even the grove in front of the church, were crowded with listeners anxious to hear the new preacher. Some, no doubt, came from motives of curiosity, but the greater portion were there with a true desire to hear the gospel. "Never," says an eye-witness, "have I seen a multitude together so eager to hear the words

of life." The sermon ended, he came down from the pulpit, and, standing in the altar, he was soon surrounded by the "ancient men" of the church, who earnestly desired him to make another appointment. The congregation having in the meantime stood still, he announced that he would preach again as desired, appointing the time.

"The second sermon was attended by a still greater multitude of people, some coming from a distance of ten and fifteen miles. The day was pleasant. The organ, long silent, had been repaired by the skilful hands of Mr. John Betz, the schoolmaster, and was made to accompany the hymns by Stophel Aupel. The theme of the preacher was the astonishing love of Jesus Christ in condescending to come into the world to save sinners. The absolute necessity of timely preparation to meet death was earnestly and pathetically urged upon all present. Towards the conclusion, different classes were separately addressed and exhorted. The young were asked how the hope for a blissful eternity stood with them; and they were entreated to seek the Lord early, and remember their Creator in the days of their youth. Then the preacher turned to those in middle life, and in words of melting tenderness and burning zeal were they warned against delay, and urged to flee from the wrath to come. Finally, he turned to the aged, among whom sat his own venerable father, crying with the deepest feeling, 'Oh, you who are hoary-headed, how stands the matter between you and your God? You stand already as with one foot in the grave, and in a few

more days you will sink into it, and have no more any portion forever in all that is done under the sun. You have, through a long life, enjoyed the mercies and favors of your kind heavenly Father; have you served Him with a full submission to His will, and loved Him supremely? and have you the assurance that you are reconciled to Him through His dear Son, Jesus Christ? If so, oh, then it will be well with you. But if this has not yet been done, then I now entreat you, as you value the everlasting rest and peace of your souls, do not delay, but accept the offers of mercy in Christ our dear Redeemer.'

"Such," says one who was present, "was the spirit and substance, and such, as near as I can recollect, even the closing words of this never-to-be-forgotten sermon. It made a deep impression upon me as a youth; and I remember distinctly of having seen his own father, and such men as the Dreisbachs, the Betzes, the Dunkels, the Bernharts, the Goodmans, and others, bathed in tears."

He was immediately and unanimously elected as their pastor; and the congregation of New Berlin joined with them in the call, which he agreed to accept.

Though irregularly licensed, as already mentioned, by the Brethren, from whose fellowship he was now withdrawn, he was not yet ordained, or even licensed, by the Synod of the German Reformed Church.

It appears that Mr. Aurandt regarded the license which he had received from the "Brethren" as a

sufficient warrant to go forward as a minister, and even to administer the holy sacraments. These persons made very little account of ordination, as it seems. Even Newcomer was not ordained till about the year 1812, though he had been bishop long before that time! About that time, by the persuasion of Otterbein, he submitted to ordination — which was done in Baltimore, in a private way, in Otterbein's study, by himself and a Methodist minister.<sup>1</sup> By the example of such leaders, Mr. Aurandt was misled into a like irregularity, which he afterwards deeply regretted. He began to catechize in the Dreisbach congregation; and, as there had been no regular pastor there for a considerable time, the young had been neglected, and now a large number attended his instructions, whom he also afterwards confirmed, and baptized such as had not before received that sacrament. "Never since that day," says an aged eye-witness, "have I witnessed such solemnity and strong feeling as on that day of the consecration of those youth, and the next day at communion."

On the 3d of May, 1801, Synod met at York, Pa. Among its proceedings we read that "a request was received from the congregations in New Berlin and Buffalo Valley asking for the examination and ordination of Mr. Aurandt." He himself was present. It seems, however, that Synod had heard something of the irregularities into which Mr. Aurandt had been drawn in consequence of his former connection with the Brethren, and that he had

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<sup>1</sup> See Newcomer's Journal.



exercised certain ministerial prerogatives received from the Brethren, which Synod did not regard as legitimate. Hence the action of Synod further says: "A committee, consisting of Revs. Wack, Sr., Becker, and Hendel, was accordingly appointed to examine him this evening, on the condition, however, that it be first ascertained whether he has not been guilty of administering the sacraments without authority. The committee are to report at to-morrow morning's session."

In the proceedings of the next day's session, we find the following: "The committee on the case of Mr. Aurandt reported. As it appeared, however, that he had administered the sacrament of baptism in a certain case, for having done which he is very sorry,<sup>1</sup> and he at the same time requests that his examination be deferred for a season, inasmuch as he feels himself wholly unfitted at present to undergo an examination, and it is his purpose to receive instruction from Rev. Wagner for some time to come, the examination was postponed until further directions are given by Synod. It was resolved that Mr. Aurandt be permitted to present himself at the next meeting of Synod for examination, and that he be directed, in the meantime, to abstain from administering the holy sacraments and attending on the so-called 'Big Meetings,' and to prosecute his studies under the direction of a minister in connection with the Synod."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thus did Mr. Aurandt nobly retrace his steps from the erroneous position into which he had been led, as soon as he saw the irregularity.

<sup>2</sup> See Minutes of Synod, translated by Dr. Fisher, page 29.

In what way and to what extent Mr. Aurandt carried out his own desire and the instruction of Synod in regard to prosecuting his preparatory studies, does not appear. There is no notice of his appearing for examination at the next meeting of Synod, nor yet at several subsequent annual meetings, till in the year 1806, when "Mr. Aurandt and his congregations" again presented a request that Synod would "ordain him, and receive him into connection with Synod."<sup>1</sup> In regard to this request, it was "resolved to postpone the farther consideration of it until to-morrow morning, when it shall be disposed of in private session."<sup>2</sup> Next morning, "it was resolved, in private session of Synod, that Mr. Aurandt be examined by a committee consisting of the President, Secretary, and Revs. Wagner and Dreyer, with a view to ascertain whether he possesses the requisite qualifications for receiving a license."<sup>3</sup> This decision was made known to the elders in open Synod, and was unanimously concurred in by them. The *tentamen* which the committee held with him was so far satisfactory, that he was licensed for one year, "on condition that he should diligently prosecute his studies during the year."<sup>4</sup>

At the Synod of 1807, a committee was appointed to ascertain whether Mr. Aurandt had complied

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Synod, p. 41. This request came from congregations in Huntington County, as the reader will see farther on.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes p. 41. This 'private session' was a ministerial session without the elders.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

with the conditions upon which his license had been granted him for the past year. All was found to be right, and his license was renewed for another year.<sup>1</sup> He again appeared at the Synod of 1809, convened in Hagerstown, Md.; on the first day of May, when it was directed that he be ordained to the office of the holy ministry; and the solemnity took place the first evening of the session. Mr. Moyer, who lately died in Schuylkill County, Pa., was ordained with him at the same time.<sup>2</sup>

This is the history of Mr. Aurandt's life from his first application for ordination to Synod, in 1801, up to the time when he was actually ordained, in 1809, so far as it appears upon the synodical records. For an account of his doings in the meantime in the open field, we must look elsewhere. Though Synod did not at first regard him adequately qualified to be fully instated in the holy office, it seems it did not forbid him the use of his talents in the way of preaching and exhortation as he had been employing it up to that time; but only forbade him to administer the holy sacraments, directed him to prosecute his studies under the direction of some regular Reformed minister, and required him to withdraw himself from all participation in the fanatical and disorderly proceedings of the Brethren in their "Big Meetings." He seems to have so explained the sense of Synod as to feel free to go forward in his accustomed endeavors to do good, in so far as he did not do what it had forbidden him. Accordingly, while he may have ap-

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<sup>1</sup> See Minutes, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

plied himself to study in a private way, part of his time under the direction of some minister, we find him in the field. He preached to the congregation of Buffalo Valley and New Berlin, and at some other points.

In September, 1803, he started on a kind of exploring missionary tour. His course lay through Brush Valley and Penn's Valley in Centre County, then through the counties of Huntingdon, Bedford, Fayette, Washington, Westmoreland, Alleghany, and Cambria. He was absent eight or ten weeks, during which time he preached often and in many places; among them are remembered Mathom's on Spruce Creek, Christian Harnish's, Williamsburg, Clover Creek, Miller's, Fouse's, Winebrenner's, in Huntingdon County; Heffly's or Peter's, Yellow Creek, Mathias Smith's, on Dennis Creek, and Bedford, in Bedford County; Stadtler's on the Alleghany Mountain, and Pittsburg. He also preached at many places in the other counties, the names of which are not now remembered.

After his return from this missionary tour, he retired entirely from farming, left the farm, and removed to a house in the gap of the mountain which lies between Buffalo and Dry Valleys, not far from his father. He continued to preach to the congregations of Buffalo Valley and New Berlin, and in addition to them also in Brush and Penn's Valleys, whose wants he saw on his late tour. He also frequently visited the people up the West Branch of the Susquehanna, especially at Muncy; and down the Susquehanna, on both sides, at Penn's

Creek and in Lykens Valley. In this field he continued till late in the year 1804.

It seems that in his visit westward he was so impressed with the religious destitution of the people in the valleys and settlements along the Juniata that he had a strong desire to go and preach to them. Accordingly, in October, 1804, he removed to Huntingdon County, and settled down about one mile east of the Yellow Springs. Here he began to lay the foundation of the Waterstreet charge.

After having preached here over a year, the congregations, as we have seen, united with him in an earnest application to Synod for his ordination and his full instating into the office of the holy ministry. Synod regularly licensed him, with directions still to pursue his studies diligently. Thus he returned to his field of labor, till he finally obtained ordination in May, 1809. It is proper to say that, in this long delay in granting him ordination, there appears nothing in the way of impediment pertaining to the moral or religious character of Mr. Aurandt. The hesitation was occasioned entirely by supposed deficiency in educational training. The standard of ministerial qualifications was held pretty high by such men as Wagner, Hendel, Becker, Helfenstein, Pomp, Sr., and others, who were learned men; whereas Mr. Aurandt brought to the office only extraordinary natural gifts—more native power than intellectual polish, more piety than polite learning. Like David among the sheepfolds of Bethlehem, and Amos among the herdsmen of Tekoà, God found and called him—a peculiar man for a peculiar time and a peculiar work.

Having now power to administer the holy sacraments as well as to preach, he found his sphere of labor much enlarged, and enlarging. He was almost constantly on journeys. The field over which he travelled extended east and west from Huntingdon to Bedford, a distance of about sixty miles; southeast and northwest from Chillcotes-town, now Cassville, and its vicinity to Franks-town, from forty to fifty miles; travelling over often almost impassable roads and along by-paths, over rivers and mountains. Besides this, he generally, twice a year, paid a visit to Cumberland, Md., on the head-waters of the Potomac, thirty-five miles beyond Bedford. He made all his journeys on horseback.

The congregations and preaching-places included in his district — whose church edifices were such as these: small churches built of round, unhewn logs, clapboard covered school-houses, private dwellings, barns, and, when the weather permitted, a large oak-tree or a shady grove — were Huntingdon, Breidenbach's near Schäffer's Creek, Petersburg, Casper Wecht's, Sinking Valley, Philip Roller's school-house north of Waterstreet; Christian Harnish's, in Morris Township, Williamsburg, Michael Henlin's school-house in the Cove, Fouse's, Winebrenner's, now Martinsburg, Greenfield, Heffly's or Peter's, Yellow Creek, Mathias Smith's, on Dennis Creek, and Bedford, in Bedford County. Thence east, on the Raystown Branch of the Juniata, Chillcotesville, now Cassville, in Huntingdon County, Steever's, near the head-waters of Little Trough

Creek, Philip Snare's, in Plank Cabin Valley, Esquire James Entriiken's, near the Raystown Branch, Grove school-house, in Woodcock Valley, McConnelstown, and occasionally at various other places, far and near, in the week and on Sabbath, by day and by night. He often preached three times on a Sabbath—riding as high as fifteen miles between the services, over rough roads and along narrow paths. He was sundry times in “perils of flood,” in crossing swollen streams and deep rivers. He was often invited from distant and neglected neighborhoods, by pious families, to come and preach in their houses, to which the neighbors were invited—which calls he always obeyed when it was in his power. This made him many warm friends in regions remote from his immediate charge. He attended an almost incredible number of funerals and marriages, for which he often received no remuneration whatever of a pecuniary kind, and generally but a small amount—the country being new, and the people for the most part poor.

A number of church edifices were erected in various parts of his charge during his ministry—one in Williamsburg, one near Frankstown, one in Sinking Valley, one in Chillcotestown, one at Waterstreet, one at Huntingdon, and one at Martinsburg. Besides these, a number of new school-houses were erected, so as to answer at the same time as churches, forming thus the nuclei of future congregations and churches.

Such is a picture of the field and the ministerial labors of this self-sacrificing servant of Christ as he

continued them in this charge for about twenty-seven years, up to the time when old age and death closed his earthly career. He was the first minister of any denomination who officiated as regular pastor in that region of country.

Mr. Aurandt was compelled to pursue his many ministerial duties amid great bodily tribulations. Even from the earliest period of manhood, he was subject to periodical afflictions of gout and rheumatism, which continued, increasing with age, to the end of his life. He always attributed the origin of this diseased state of his body to hardships and exposures endured during his service in the Revolutionary war. The attacks were mostly confined to several months in the spring and fall, confining him to his bed, but on some occasions they continued longer; and at one time, towards the end of his life, he was confined to his bed and room for a whole year. During the greater part of the time of these attacks, he suffered the most excruciating pain, with scarcely any intermission. His hands, elbows, feet, and knees were swelled and inflamed in every joint, "and his condition of woe," says an eye-witness, "often reminded me of that of Job." During these days and nights of unremitting pain, he would frequently repeat words of that suffering patriarch, and draw consolation for himself from them. Especially would he often rally his faith and cry out in his anguish: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:



whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me," Job xix. 25-27. He would frequently remark that all our sufferings could only continue as long as God would permit, and would not only at last all come to an end, but that they were for our good while they lasted. Then, too, how welcome, to the suffering and weary, the friendly messenger death, the peaceful rest of the grave, and above all the painless, tearless, sinless fruition of the life that never ends.

There is a calm for those who weep,  
A rest for weary pilgrims found:  
They softly lie and sweetly sleep  
Low in the ground.

The storm that wrecks the winter sky  
No more disturbs their deep repose,  
Than summer evening's latest sigh  
That shuts the rose.

I long to lay this painful head  
And aching heart beneath the soil,  
To slumber in that dreamless bed,  
From all my toil.

The end, towards which he looked with desire rather than dread, drew steadily nearer. In 1829, he removed from Morris Township to Porter Township, in Hertzlog Valley, where Mr. Knode now resides, about three miles southeast of Alexandria, where he spent the last few years of his life confined to his room, and mostly by day sitting on a chair, gladly receiving the visits of his numerous

friends, and entertaining them with profitable conversation.

He delivered his last sermon in the school-house on Clover Creek, in Morrison's Cove, in the latter part of the summer of 1830. It was a communion occasion, and the last one of his life. The congregation sent for him a two-horse carriage, carefully conveying him to the school-house—which was their church<sup>1</sup>—and as carefully returning him to his home again, a distance of seventeen or eighteen miles. He was then very feeble in body, and had to deliver the greatest portion of his sermon in a sitting posture, which he frequently had to do on other occasions in the latter part of his life.

Towards the close of the year 1830, about four months before his death, he began to be confined to his bed entirely, his disease taking a form something like consumption. He manifested great patience in his sufferings. On one occasion, he remarked to Rev. Father Fouse, "If these pains should last a thousand years, I should not complain; for I know that they will end, and I shall be at rest. I feel assured of it. Never in my life have I felt so well spiritually!"

He greatly grew in the divine life in his last long sickness. He prayed much, and in great penitence and faith. One day, near his end, when there was no one in the room but his wife and his youngest daughter, he suddenly fell into a very rapturous spirit of prayer. "He seemed as in a trance, moved

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<sup>1</sup> A fine church has since been built near this place, which is called Zion's church.

by a divine impulse." He called upon God, in whom he believed, for Christ's sake, to forgive his errors whenever and wherever committed; cast them far behind him into the sea of forgetfulness, and remember them no more. In the same spirit he asked the blessing and favor of God upon his family and posterity, and upon all the members of his charge. He remembered especially, in this remarkable prayer, the Church militant of the great Redeemer; and he continued long in the most sublime intercessions and pleadings for the increase and final triumph and glory of the Church of Jesus Christ. This was the last of his audible prayers.

A short time after this, one night, about two o'clock in the morning, while his son Jonathan was watching at his bedside, the aged pilgrim laid his hand on his breast, and said: "Siehe da, meine Brust ist kalt—mein End ist hier. Gott, hier bin ich!" These were his last words. Those in the house were quickly awakened; but before they reached his bedside, the silver cord was loosed, the golden bowl was broken, and the spirit had returned to God who gave it.

He died about two o'clock in the morning, on the 24th day of April, in the year of our Lord 1831, aged 70 years, 5 months, and 16 days. On the 26th he was buried, in front of Zion's church, at Water-street—now Shaeffersville—in Huntingdon County, Pa. Two ministers were present and officiated on the solemn occasion. Rev. Jacob Martin, at that time Lutheran minister in Williamsburg and Sinking Valley, preached a sermon from the words,

"Call the laborers, and give them their hire" (Matt. xx. 8). Rev. Mr. Schneider, of the Mennonite persuasion, also took part in the exercises. The latter often visited him in his last days: <sup>on</sup> which occasions they spoke much together on edifying subjects, and Mr. Schneider would always offer fervent prayer at his bedside before parting. Amid a large assembly of friends and members of his churches, to whom he had for many years administered the consolations of the gospel, his remains were lowered into the grave,—"earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust: looking for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

His resting-place is marked by a large headstone, of a grayish color, erected by his children and some members of the Waterstreet charge, on which is inscribed:

In Memory of the

REV. JOHN DIETRICH AURANDT,

Who departed this life April 24th, A. D. 1831, aged 70 years, 5 months, and 18<sup>1</sup> days. He was pastor of the Reformed congregations in Huntingdon County for twenty-seven years, and delivered his last sermon<sup>2</sup> in Zion's church, Waterstreet, December 25th, 1829, from Isaiah ninth chapter and sixth verse: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

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<sup>1</sup>This is a mistake. It should be 16 days.

<sup>2</sup>This means the last sermon in *that* church. The last sermon delivered in his life was preached in the school-house on Clover Creek. See page 200.

## II. TIMOTHY iv. 7, 8.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

He left behind him a widow, who, on the 13th of August, 1849, followed him into eternity; also four sons and four daughters, two of whom have since died. His descendants reside principally in Huntingdon County, and are highly respectable citizens, and worthy members of the Church.

Mr. Aurandt was what is generally called a self-made man. Natural gifts and divine grace, rather than education, made him what he was. He was gifted with a fine mind, a good memory, a quick and ready flow of thought and language, and a clear enunciation — in which there was only one defect, namely, a difficulty in pronouncing the letter *r*; though this did not render his speaking in the least unpleasant. His voice was strong and deep; and there was much unction and tenderness in his appeals and exhortations. He was able to preach only in the German language.

In person, he was straight and tall — six feet two inches in height, and his general frame in symmetrical proportion; made up, however, rather of bone and sinew than flesh. He was a man of great physical strength. His hair, which he always combed back, was straight, and of a light-brown color; but he began to become slightly bald at the age of twenty-eight, which tendency increased with

years, so that in old age he was entirely bald on the crown of his head. His face was somewhat long; his forehead high and prominent; his head much longer from the face backward than it was from temple to temple; he had a Roman nose, and a very brilliant blue eye.

He possessed, in a great degree, the spirit of kindness and good-will towards all men. He was much inclined to cultivate peace; was easy of access; had a particular fondness for children, whom he loved for their gentleness, and who loved him for his kind notice of them. What Goldsmith, in the *Deserted Village*, says of the village pastor of Auburn, could also be said of him.

“The service past, around the pious man,  
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran:  
Ev’n children followed, with endearing wile,  
And plucked his gown, to share the good man’s smile.  
His ready smile a parent’s warmth expressed,  
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest.”

Through life, Mr. Aurandt enjoyed the confidence and good-will of all ministers of other denominations with whom he came in contact. He had a bosom friend in the Rev. Mr. Butler, of the Lutheran Church, residing in Cumberland, Md. Though they lived far apart, yet they often visited one another, and frequently preached and administered the holy communion together; on such occasions Mr. Butler would preach in English and Mr. Aurandt in German; and the members of both denominations, led on by the example of their pastors, would together surround the table of their

common Lord. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Both these divines had served in the Revolutionary war, — Mr. Butler as chaplain, and Mr. Aurandt as a grenadier.

"His charity towards the poor and strangers," says one who knew him well, "often exceeded good judgment." In many instances his goodness was abused by the unworthy. About the year 1793 he sustained a heavy pecuniary loss in the purchase of wheat for the French. This, with other losses, brought upon him by the failure of some friends for whom he had become security, made him poor before he left Buffalo Valley. In the course of time he became possessed of a farm in Huntingdon County, where he lived; which, however, as in the other case, was made a sacrifice by losses originating in his kindness in endorsing for his friends, and was sold by the sheriff before his death. Having received but a small salary and few perquisites, he was not able to redeem his home. Still, he was not destitute: in addition to the kind aid of his children and the grateful offerings of his people, he received a United States pension, for services in the war, of \$96 annually, for some years preceding his death. Thus he died poor; and yet, in his experience, was fulfilled the glorious word: "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." What further does a Christian need?

Having been in the war of the Revolution from motives of patriotism, he ever after felt a deep in-

terest in the civil affairs of the country. It was one of his weaknesses — or, if that word is too strong, one of his tendencies — to be somewhat fond of politics. His mind would frequently glide into that current in his conversation, and, it is said, even in his preaching, though not so as to injure his influence among his people. Prevailed upon by some of his friends, and being at the time not in good health, he suffered himself to be elected as a member of the State Legislature, in 1819. Bodily indisposition, however, prevented him from attending regularly upon its sessions.

Mr. Aurandt loved the Church, and to her interests he cheerfully devoted his talents and a long and laborious life. The fruits of his toil are seen in the flourishing churches and charges which now cover the extensive field over which he travelled, and which he zealously nursed in their feeble infancy. His memory is still gratefully cherished by many of the aged to whom he ministered, who “remain to this present,” while others, whom he led into the path of life, have been gathered with him to their eternal reward in the kingdom of the saints.



## REV. JOHN PETER MAHNENSCHMIDT.

1783 — 1857.

THIS modest servant of Jesus Christ, and first pioneer of the German Reformed Church in Ohio, was born in the year 1783, most probably in one of the western counties of Pennsylvania — Somerset or Westmoreland.

His parents were pious persons. His father followed the calling of a school-master, at first in Westmoreland, and afterwards in Washington County, Pa. Until the eighteenth year of his age, John Peter lived with and labored for his father, after which he was left to work his own way through life. About this time we find him employed alternately as day-laborer and school-teacher in Somerset County, and later in Washington County. While thus engaged, he was also active religiously, wherever he abode, in establishing and conducting prayer-meetings among such as were piously disposed, with a view of edifying them and himself.

As early as his sixteenth year, he was instructed in the doctrines of God's word, according to the Heidelberg Catechism, by a colleague of Mr. Otterbein. This proved the means of great and decided blessing to him, moving him earnestly to turn to

God in heart and life. He sought and found the Lord to the comfort and satisfaction of his spirit; and the grace which he experienced in his own heart powerfully moved him to exhort others to seek reconciliation with God. Repentance and conversion were the themes on which he dwelt in all his exhortations, and his honest efforts were owned of the Lord to the good of many. The result was that he was urged on all sides to give himself to the work of the ministry. This gave him many anxious thoughts, and cost him earnest inward struggles, in view especially of his sense of unworthiness. Under this pressure from without and from within, he shed many tears in private.

As early as in his nineteenth year, while he was teaching school in Somerset County, he was on one occasion formally and earnestly solicited to preach a funeral sermon. After much hesitation and with many misgivings, he at length consented, and delivered a discourse to a multitude of people, who listened to him with evident satisfaction.

After this he took a school in Washington County, which, after some time, he gave into the hands of his father, while he took charge of another about ten miles distant. The Reformed minister in that region had just died; and as they failed in securing another to succeed him, the people earnestly solicited young Mahnenschmidt to give himself to the work of the ministry. He at length consented, and began about the year 1806 to serve those vacant congregations. In 1811 he went to the meeting of Synod, while convened in Reading on the

12th of May in that year, to make application for regular licensure and ordination. In his first zeal, and perhaps urged on by the people, he had inconsiderately performed ministerial acts previous to an orderly induction into the sacred office. The committee appointed to report on his application, say: "This young man expressed regret for his error committed in baptizing children, and stated that he did it through ignorance. In other respects he is worthy of being received." It was then resolved that he be received and appointed as a catechist in his field, and Rev. Mr. Aurandt, then stationed at Waterstreet, was requested to visit him as often as possible. At the meeting of Synod in Philadelphia, April, 1812, he was licensed; and on account of the distance of his charge from the place of meeting, his license was made to extend over three years; and he was permitted to serve congregations as a regular minister.

He had now served those congregations in Washington County about six years. In the meantime he was married; and as the congregations did not give him an adequate support, he was compelled to support himself and family, in part, by the labor of his own hands. This induced him, in 1812, to accept an invitation to visit Ohio, where some congregations were beginning to form. He was received and welcomed in a very affectionate and friendly manner by the people. He preached in various places — in houses, school-houses, and even in log-cabins, greatly to the joy of the people. They immediately extended to him an earnest call

to come among them and minister to their spiritual wants. He accepted their call, and removed to Ohio. When his people in Washington County saw that he was leaving them, they entreated him to remain, and promptly promised to make up the deficiencies of the past; but it had happened to them as it still does to those congregations that do not know how to appreciate a faithful pastor's services till their ingratitude forces him away. It was, however, too late! He had made his new engagements, and must go. It does not appear that the congregations he served have since been served by German Reformed ministers.

Mr. Mahnenschmidt purchased one hundred and ten acres of land at a very low rate, near a place called Springfield, in the northeastern part of Ohio, on which he made his home. Here he properly commenced the labors of his life. His self-sacrificing missionary labors in this large field, in Columbiana and adjoining counties, during a period of forty-five years, forms an interesting chapter in the history of the German Reformed Church in Ohio, and is worthy of record and grateful remembrance.

In 1836, when this good father was already old and full of days, we requested him to furnish us a record of his life and labors; which he also did in a truly modest manner in several letters, extending in all over about thirty closely written foolscap pages. From this interesting document we shall translate freely, believing that our readers will prefer to hear this faithful servant of Christ and the

Church relate the story of his eventful life and abundant labors in his own truly humble way.

Having brought down the events of his life to the time of his removal to Ohio, the substance of which we have already given, he proceeds to say: "In the last week of March, 1813, several teams came from Ohio to convey myself and family to our new home. I was thus the first German Reformed minister who located himself in Ohio. Rev. Thomas Winters, it is true, already resided in Ohio; but he was at that time not yet a member of the Reformed Synod, but became a member two years after I had come into Ohio. Two, or at most three years later, Rev. Weisz came out also, and located himself in New Lancaster. According to my best recollection, there were, in 1817, only three German Reformed ministers in the State of Ohio. When I reflect that there are now so many Reformed ministers in this State, and the Church is so widely extended, I must believe that God's mighty hand has been, and still is, in this movement."

When Mr. Mahnenschmidt came to Ohio, the moral and religious condition of the people seems to have been deplorable; which is easily explained, seeing they were so long destitute of the ministry and regular religious instruction. Desecration of the Sabbath especially prevailed widely; but his faithful reproofs in a few years wrought a very perceptible change for the better. He immediately began to preach at nine different places, namely, in Springfield, Salem, Good Hope, Jacob's, Roller's, and Ackertown, in Columbia County; and at

Boardman's, at Liberty, and Canfield in Trumbull County. To these he added, after some time, yet three others. In all these there were only three log-churches, and of these only one was finished. "Accordingly," he says, "I preached in farmers' houses, in old, crazy-looking log-barns, and under the oak-trees. Only at five of my preaching-points were there organized congregations; and seven of them had neither printed nor written rules of order. As wild and uncultivated as was the country itself, so were also the inhabitants, especially the youth. The wild animals of the forest were still around the habitations of men. During the week the people labored on their farms, and the Sabbath was devoted to hunting. I often heard the report of guns on the Sabbath, to the great grief of my heart, while riding from one of my preaching-points to another. These things often caused the silent tear to start as I rode along in meditation. I contended against this evil with all my might; held up before them the sinfulness of their conduct, and showed them how they exposed themselves to the displeasure of that God who has said, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' In a few years such a favorable change was effected, that it was but seldom that the report of a gun was heard on the Sabbath day.

"There were also many other sinful customs prevalent at that time. Many were in the habit of collecting together to hold shooting-matches, on which occasions there was often much drunkenness, causing shameful profanity of God's name; and the whole seldom ended without a fight. Many, too,

were in the habit of frequenting the dance. Against all these things I took a decided stand; and often in no smooth or measured style did I warn them against these and such like services of the Devil. Many forsook their sinful ways; others continued in them."

Mr. Mahnenschmidt then proceeds to give an account of the different congregations and points in which he labored in the counties of Columbiana and Trumbull.

BOARDMAN'S.—"Here I preached in the house of a farmer until they built a log-church. Two years after me a pious Lutheran preacher from Washington County, Pa., came to Ohio, and located about eleven miles from my residence. This gave me great joy, and very much lessened my labors. Rev. H. Huiet was a good, peaceable colleague. Six years before me, an excellent, somewhat aged Lutheran minister located himself in New Lisbon. This patriarch was a great blessing to me. He was a scientific and well-educated man, and often visited me, and I him. I was a young man, and in many things ignorant; and he embraced every opportunity to communicate instruction to me. We were together as brethren. He died several years ago, old and weary of life, and rests from his labors."

SPRINGFIELD.—"The Springfield congregation had also built a log-church, the floor of which was laid when I came among them. Later, it was also finished and consecrated. In this congregation I held catechetical instruction every two years, and each time confirmed from fifteen to thirty-five members."

SALEM.—“In the Salem congregation I also found a small wooden church; but, being too small, it was never finished. Years after, they built in place of it a large, beautiful brick church. Here also they had as yet no rules of order. I wrote rules of order for all the congregations which had not yet prepared any, and they were unanimously adopted by them. In this congregation I found some opposition to the discipline, because an intemperate use of spirituous liquor was therein forbidden. The argument against it was: ‘We live in a free country, where no one should suffer himself to be bound.’ To which I replied, that we wished to leave them in possession of all the freedom which God and the Bible gave them; but they should remember that the word of God distinctly says that no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God. In this congregation there seemed always to be some kind of disturbance during all of the eighteen years I served them.”<sup>1</sup>

GOOD HOPE.—“Here was as yet no church built — not even a beginning made. When I had been but a few months in Ohio, some of these people came to me, and asked me whether I would not preach for them. After some inquiry, I answered them, As soon as you have built a church, if I am still alive and in good health, I will do so. They

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<sup>1</sup> Thus far the author. The rest was unwritten, and we had to complete it the best way we could. The German letters of Father M. were very much mutilated, and we found it difficult to get up a connected story. This will account for any mistakes that may occur in the relation of facts.—D. Y. H.



immediately went to work, and in a year's time had a house of worship erected; and I commenced to serve them, continuing seventeen years."

ROLLER'S.—"This congregation had a small log building under roof, which was soon afterwards finished. It was, however, too small, especially on communion occasions, when we generally held our services, if the weather was fine, under an oak-tree, and spent many a pleasant hour thus under the open heavens. This congregation enjoyed peace and harmony, until at length this delightful state was disturbed by the influx of some fanatical elements, when many left the congregation, and abused the church which they had left. I did not, in these circumstances, return evil for evil — a thing which no one can charge me with."

ST. JAMES.—"This congregation had a house which served both for school and church purposes. But as the membership greatly increased, they built a commodious brick church. This congregation was in good circumstances, and the church was at once paid for. Peace and harmony prevailed until the so-called New Measures introduced themselves. Since then, two churches exist scarcely a quarter of a mile apart."

ACKERTOWN.—"The congregation here had no church of their own. I mostly preached in a farmhouse; occasionally also in the Baptist church of the village. As the Germans lived far apart, the number of hearers was generally small. Sometimes I also preached for them at a place eight miles farther down the river. At this place I preached

about twelve years. I also preached on the west branch of the river; how long exactly I cannot say. Here there was a small log-church built; but as many Germans moved into this neighborhood, and were instructed and confirmed, the church soon became too small. They have, since I left them, erected a new church. The reason why I resigned here was, that my charge was too large, and this church too distant, being twenty-six miles away. I served these eleven congregations twelve years, preaching for them every four weeks."

LIBERTY.—"Here I also preached at this time, and gathered in many souls; also at Canfield. To this congregation I had a ride of sixteen miles; to Liberty twenty, to Boardman's eleven, to Roller's fifteen, to St. James' eighteen. These, with several other congregations—ten in number—constituted my field of labor at this time."

"At a later date I was also asked to preach every four weeks in New Lisbon, which I consented to do. This congregation I served about twelve years. I was at this time a young man; yet I often felt exhausted, having no rest day or night. I received also letters about the same time from Canton, Stark County, requesting me to visit them and preach for them. I complied with their request, and preached to a very large number of persons in the town-hall. They pressed me very earnestly to preach for them regularly, urging that there were many young persons who ought to be instructed and confirmed. At this place there was a Lutheran minister, with whom I had before been acquainted, who

offered to instruct these young persons in the Heidelberg Catechism, and prepare them for confirmation. At length I received a letter requesting me to come and complete their course of instruction and confirm them. When I arrived, I found about fifty catechumens. These, however, were not all young persons; there were among them fathers and mothers, who were old enough to be my parents. I held catechetical instructions with them for one week, and then confirmed them, and administered to them the Holy Communion, while many tears of joy and of sorrow were shed. I also afterwards confirmed thirty-odd more in the same place."

"Applications for preaching came also from the western counties of Pennsylvania,<sup>1</sup> as well as from a number of other places in Ohio. Everywhere there was a longing for the preached word."

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<sup>1</sup> In a long and interesting "Report on the history, lives, and labors of the ministers of the Mercer County Charge, to Clarion Classis," by the Rev. Henry F. Hartman, we find the following passage: "The Rev. Mr. Mahnenschmidt, the regular pastor of the Springfield charge, then in Trumbull, but now in Mahoning County, Ohio, was the first minister who visited our people in various parts of Mercer County, and preached for them occasionally. He visited first what was afterwards called the Zion's congregation, eight miles south of Mercer, in Wolfcreek Township. He also preached two miles south of West Greenville, where afterwards a congregation was organized by the name of 'Good Hope.' At these two places he preached occasionally. He afterwards formed also catechetical classes and instructed them in the doctrines of the Church. From time to time he also administered the Communion and baptized the infants of Christian parents." See Ger. Ref. Mess., Aug. 8th, 1858.—D. Y. H.

From these somewhat extended extracts from the communication of Father Mahnenschmidt, it will be seen how extensive and laborious his field of labor at this time was. He felt himself constrained, therefore, to give up some of his congregations to different brethren. The Rev. Henry Sonnendecker occupied a large portion of his field, while he himself labored more particularly in the vicinity of North Jackson, where he continued to reside until the year 1843, when he removed to Wooster, Wayne County, Ohio. His charge consisted of six congregations. Here he remained only for several years, when he returned again, in 1847, to North Jackson. He continued to live here and at Frederick, Mahoning Co., Ohio, and labored, as he had strength, up to near the time of his death, which occurred in 1857.

The life of Father Mahnenschmidt was one of great activity, faithfulness, and success. It is almost inconceivable how he could hold out under the enormous amount of labor which he performed. In the earlier part of his ministry, for many years together, he had ten regular congregations under his care, besides preaching very frequently at different other points outside of his regular charge.

His private character was excellent. All the notices we have of him are favorable. From his own statement of his life and labors, furnished the author, we are able to conclude that, with all his activity, he had but a poor opinion of his labors. It is interesting to read the simple story of his doings and experiences, which he composed only a little over a year before his death.

The following notice of his demise we take from a religious paper, without knowing the name of the writer. Coming from a stranger, a member of another Church, it is the more valuable. He says: "The Rev. John Peter Mahnenschmidt has gone to his blessed reward. He died July 11th, 1857, in Canfield, Mahoning Co., Ohio, aged 74 years. He entered the ministry of the German Reformed Church when but eighteen years of age, and labored until within a few months of his death. He was very successful in winning souls to Christ—was evangelic in his views and preaching. He was a pioneer of the German Reformed Church in the West, having established the first church of his denomination this side of the Alleghanies, and the first in this region of Ohio. He died as he lived—firm in the faith, and with an assurance of a glorious immortality."

So dies the faithful servant of Christ, falling asleep in Jesus, with the sweet and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

## REV. HENRY RASSMAN.

1753 — 1832.

HENRY RASSMAN, the first German Reformed minister who resided in Centre County, Pa., was born in Germany, April 20th, 1753. At what precise time he emigrated to this country is not now known, as no writings from which it might be traced are left behind. He came in as a German schoolmaster, and after his arrival pursued his calling for a time in Lancaster County, Pa., and afterwards in Lykens Valley, Dauphin County, and still later conducted a German school in Rebersburg, Centre County, Pa.

About the year 1811, he was constrained to devote himself to the work of the holy ministry under peculiar circumstances. In the beautiful and fertile valleys of Centre County there resided at the time a goodly number of members of the German Reformed Church, who had removed thither principally from the counties of Berks, Lebanon, York, and Northampton. All these came from neighborhoods where they had been accustomed to enjoy the privileges of the ministry and the regular services of the Church. But in their new homes, then as yet a new country, they found, to their sorrow, that these spiritual advantages did not exist.

On account of the scarcity of ministers then, they were only seldom visited by travelling ministers. Deeply feeling their destitute condition in this respect, the desire grew ever stronger in them for a stated minister, who would preach for them regularly, and perform all the other offices of a Christian minister among them. Besides resorting to earnest prayer to God, they also counselled on the subject with the Rev. Mr. Ilgen, who was at the time Lutheran minister in Centre County. As there was a great want of ministers generally, he advised them to turn to the schoolmaster, Mr. Henry Rassman, and induce him to enter the holy ministry and take upon himself the service of their forsaken congregations.

As Mr. Rassman was known as a pious and humble man, and had at times read sermons, and delivered addresses on funeral occasions even previous to 1810, the advice given them found favor, and was carried into effect. Soon after, he was visited by the sainted father Jacob Keller, elder in the Loop congregation, in order to advise with him in regard to their circumstances, to lay the matter before him, and urge him to comply with their wishes. The matter commended itself to Mr. Rassman, and he felt its solemnity; and he at length concluded, in the name of the Lord, to yield to the call.

Accompanied by his pious elder, Father Jacob Keller, he appeared before Synod, convened in Philadelphia, April 27th, 1812, for examination. The committee, composed of Revs. Faber, Wack,

Jr., and Gloninger, reported favorably; and he was accordingly licensed, and his call from the congregations Loop, Boalsburg, and Penn's Creek approved and confirmed. He and his excellent elder now returned with grateful hearts and to the joy of the people, whose cherished hopes were now realized; and, among this people, who had encouraged him to take upon himself the holy office, and now received him with open hearts as their pastor, he ministered, though in much weakness, yet with great blessing and success up to the year 1828, when age and bodily infirmities required him to retire from the regular labors of the ministry.

Some idea may be formed of the labors and the immediate success of Mr. Rassman from the fact that in 1813, when he rendered the first account of his ministry to Synod, though there were only forty-five communicants in his whole charge, he reports one hundred baptisms and eighty-one confirmations for the year. He reports five congregations, though they are not named.

Mr. Rassman did not confine himself to the congregations mentioned, but extended his zealous labors over a very large field. With the exception of Rebersburg and Aaronburg, which were served by Rev. Yost H. Fries, of Mifflinburg, he had charge of all the organized congregations and other preaching-points in Centre County.

Having but a limited education and ordinary natural abilities, he is said nevertheless to have had extensive acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, and delivered very impressive and edifying discourses.



His sermons were generally short, simple, and suitable to the occasion. According to the testimony of reliable witnesses, he was a very sincere, evangelical, and warm-hearted preacher. Through his humble Christian walk, and his unwearied ministerial industry, he was not only the means of increasing greatly the congregations which first called him, but others also were gathered and organized by his zeal.

The following letter, directed to the Rev. Casper Wack, President of Synod at its meeting in New Holland, 1816, gives us a glimpse into the times, shows us something of the man, and is to the thoughtful a most instructive little chapter on the earnest temporal anxieties which, though unnoticed by the world, often prey upon the heart of him who dare not reveal them!

“BUFFALO RUN, CENTRE COUNTY.

“With these lines I make known to the Very Reverend Synod that the congregations which I serve are well satisfied with me. I attend to the duties intrusted to me faithfully and conscientiously, according to the grace which God gives me. The Lord be praised and exalted that here also He does not fail to bless His word; although, as elsewhere, there is no want of tares and enemies of the cross of Christ upon the field of the church.

“I have removed from the parsonage in Nittany Valley to Buffalo Run. Here I have rented a spot, where, God be praised, I can obtain what I need. There is only one acre of land connected with the

parsonage, of which there is only one-fourth of an acre cleared; and, besides, there is a want of well-water; and, as I had to buy everything I needed for my family, I was compelled to leave it. The Penn's Creek church, which the Rev. Mr. Fries passed over to me, and the Earley's church, are my best congregations. In the rest, as Nittany, Milesburg, Bald Eagle, and Pine Creek, the people are for the most part poor. But, because here also the Lord does not leave His word without a blessing, I would not like to leave these congregations. Should, however, my salary be still farther reduced, the Reverend Synod will no doubt also have a care for me. This will only be a stronger inducement to me to apply all my strength in preparing myself to become ever more and more useful and faithful to my God in the service of His church. I pray God to bless the Reverend Synod in all its business.

Your most humble servant,

HENRY RASSMAN."

Aug. 22d, 1816.

In 1828, when he had grown old, weak in memory, and infirm in body, so as to be unable to endure the labors of a pastoral charge, his congregations felt it their duty to relieve him; and accordingly advised him to retire, which he did, and the Rev. B. S. Schneck became his successor. Being poor in worldly things and now without income from his office, and his children, as is said, not being willing that he should be sustained by the congregations, he was rather poorly provided for during

the last four years of his life. How sad it is to record this! Often, it is said, when the holy Sabbath came, he took his Hymn-Book and Bible, went like a lonely pilgrim on foot to one or other of the churches where he had been accustomed to preach, sat down on the sill of the door alone, wept and meditated for a time, and then returned again to his home. What a touching scene!

All earthly toils and sorrows have an end.  
There is

“A rest for weary pilgrims found.”

The time drew on when his heavenly Father, whom he had honored and loved as a child, saw fit kindly to end his sorrowful tarrying time, and say to him, “It is enough: come up higher.” He fell asleep sweetly in Christ, December 23d, 1832, aged 79 years, 8 months, and 3 days. On holy Christmas-day, amid a large assembly of his friends and former members of his congregations, his remains were buried in the graveyard connected with the Loop church. His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Peter S. Fisher,<sup>1</sup>—who about that time became successor to the Rev. Mr. Schneck in that charge,—from very suitable and blessed words, Luke ii. 29, 30,—the swan-song of the aged and holy Simeon.

An evidence of the respect in which he stood with his congregations and those who were his hearers,

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<sup>1</sup> For the greater part of the facts in this sketch of the life of Mr. Rassman, we are indebted to the kindness of Rev. P. S. Fisher, who has labored with such blessed results in the same field for a period of twenty-six years.

and of the lasting impressions which his childlike life and warm-hearted preaching made upon those that grew up under the influence of his ministry, we have from the author of the "Sepulchres of the Departed," the Rev. F. R. Anspach, D.D. The following passage on page 21 is known to relate to the venerable Father Rassman.

"Well do I remember a faithful, godly man, whom I was accustomed to hear in my childhood, declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. . . . The Lord brought his pilgrimage to a close, for he took him, and we were invited to follow his remains to the sepulchre. Well do I remember that solemn occasion; for although a mere lad, the scene made such an impression upon my mind, that it is vividly before me even now. The words of the preacher came with thrilling power, as he pointed to that coffin which contained the shrouded form of the holy man, and said, 'He being dead yet speaketh.' Ah, yes! he spoke even then to many a heart. Lessons long forgotten and unimproved, which had been uttered by those lips sealed by death, rose to the mind with an urgency and force they never had before. Years have passed away; my childhood is gone, and the flight of time has carried me far in the race of life; but the venerable form of that holy man is ever present as a faithful monitor, and that coffin has ever since been a silent but eloquent preacher to my soul. Blessed servant of Jesus, thou art at rest; thy conflicts are over, and thy soul has found repose."

So lived and labored, so died and passed away

from the scenes of earth, the venerable Father Rassman. Many of the members of those still flourishing congregations in Centre County yet remember his life and ministry with sacred pleasure and devout gratitude to God. Yea, all who knew him, whenever he is referred to, say: "He was a good, a pious man." Peace! peace! thou good and faithful servant of the Lord! May thy spirit rejoice in the blessed presence of Jesus Christ in the happy realms of the glorified, and thy body rest in hope till the blessed morning of the resurrection of the just, when it shall come forth made like unto His glorious body, and, united with the spirit sanctified, be welcomed together, with all the redeemed, into the kingdom prepared for the righteous from the foundation of the world!

## REV. YOST HENRY FRIES.

1777 — 1839.

YOST HENRY FRIES was born in Westphalia, in the dukedom Nassau Dillenburg, and in the town of Güsternhain, on the 24th of April, in the year of our Lord 1777. In the twenty-sixth year of his age, he emigrated to America. His pass is dated at Dillenburg, April 21st, 1803. He arrived in this country, August 20th, 1803,—landing at Baltimore, Md.

He had provided himself also with the proper papers to certify his religious and moral character, among which is a certificate of church-membership and good Christian standing, properly signed and sealed by his pastor, Rev. H. T. Westerburch, of Driedorf, dated April 24th, 1803. He also carried a letter from Martin Hinckel, of Güsternhain, to his brother, a very respectable citizen of Philadelphia, in which he says, among other things: "The bearer of this letter is Yost Henry Fries, of a respectable and honest family. He is willing, since he has here but a poor way of supporting himself, to seek his fortune in America. You will, I hope, assist him as far as may be in your power, that he may be properly established in his new home." It does not appear, however, that Mr. Fries ever found this

friend, and so the recommendation remained in his hands.

From early childhood he had already a strong inclination towards the holy ministry. As a young man, in Europe, his piety, which was earnest and full of feeling, took somewhat of the separatistic type. It may have been this spirit which so strongly inclined him towards a land of freedom. Being poor, he could see more hope of entering the ministry in a land where strict formalities were not so much observed. Whatever may have been his motives or hopes, he came, honest and alone, poor and pious, to work out the problem and mystery of his life in this new western world.

We have said he came poor. He arrived so poor that he could not pay his passage, and was compelled by his circumstances to become what was called a "redemptioner," — that is, he was bound out to serve a certain length of time, generally three years, for the man who paid his passage. When a ship arrived, farmers and others needing laborers would go to the port, and buy the time for which they were bound to serve from the captain. In this way our young Fries fell into the kind hands of a good German farmer in York County.

During his time of service he showed himself to be an honest, industrious, and trusty man, and won the full confidence and love of his employer. He was fond of improving his mind; and even during his time of service the desire of being a minister was stirring strongly within him. He would speak in small assemblies, if he got an opportunity, on re-

ligious subjects. Though there was nothing fanatical about him, yet he once went so far as to preach a sermon in a school-house on the words, "Much study is a weariness of the flesh."—Eccl. xii. 1. A singular text, certainly, to begin with.

His strong desire to be a minister, which he had felt from childhood, and which he regarded as a divine call, gradually ripened into a fixed purpose. He was encouraged, advised, and directed by Rev. Mr. Ettenger, a young man who, at that time, had charge of the German Reformed churches in the region of Mr. Fries's home, and who, it appears, knew how to sympathize with him. Arrangements being made, Mr. Fries set his feet into a new path, and new hopes and fears opened before him.

He commenced his preparatory studies to the holy ministry with Rev. Daniel Wagner, in Frederick, Md., April 3d, 1809. Being now over thirty-two years of age, his course of study was made as short as possible. When he had been about one year with Mr. Wagner, Synod met in Harrisburg, Pa., when he sent him with a letter to Synod, in which he recommended him "for examination, and also for ordination in case he be found qualified."<sup>1</sup> He was examined accordingly, and licensed, but not ordained. He, however, returned to Mr. Wagner, and remained with him, continuing his studies about one year longer.

While he was with Rev. Wagner, he was not only industrious in his studies, but also in aiding his preceptor in the heavy labors of his charge, by which

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, 1810, p. 49.



also he received such practical training for the ministry as would fit him to labor with effect when once the care of a charge should devolve on him. Only a few weeks after he came to Frederick, he already began to preach. On the 23d of April, 1809, he delivered his first sermon, in the Glade church, on Matt. x. 36. He has left us a record of his preaching as a student. During the time he was with Wagner, he preached in Frederick twenty times, in the Glades twelve times, in Middletown eleven times, in Woodbury ten times, Manor school-house three times; besides these, he preached a number of funeral sermons around Frederick. During this time he preached also at Jacob Wagner's school-house in York County, in Otterbein's church in Baltimore, and for Rev. Rahausen in Hagerstown, Md.

Before he left Frederick, he received a call from a number of congregations in York County.

Each of these congregations delegated one Elder, who met on the 10th of March, 1810, and made out a call for him. In this call they state what kind of provision they will make for his comfort should he accept the call, wishing, at the same time, that he may have "God for his comfort, and Jesus Christ for his joy." Alluding to their former mutual friendship, they say in conclusion: "We are willing to do whatever may be in our power, that no small cause may separate us; if this is also your mind, we shall remain in love together, especially if we seek to do all to the glory of God." What an excellent spirit is thus manifested by these Elders.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The call is signed by Geo. Gramling and others.

On the 18th of June, 1810, Mr. Fries bade adieu to his preceptor, and went, it seems, the same day to Hanover; for we find in a brief record kept by himself, that he preached in that place, in the evening, on Zach. xii. 10. He also records: "On the 20th of June, 1810, I took charge of my congregations in York County, Pa., to serve them for the space of two years, according to the abilities, gifts, and talents which God has given me." His charge included the following churches: 1. Schuster's, or Salem's; 2. Sattler's; 3. Fissel's, or Jerusalem; 4. Stelzen's, or Bethlehem; 5. Bleymeier's, or Immanuel's; 6. The New Church, or Lebanon; 7. Frey's; 8. Stehley's.

In the two years during which he served these congregations, he preached 262 sermons, married 38 couple, confirmed 102 persons, and baptized 309 children.

While he was pastor in York County he was induced to make a visit to Buffalo Valley, then Northumberland, but now Union County, Pa.<sup>1</sup> This charge had become vacant by the resignation of Rev. Jacob Dieffenbach, in the year 1810. This was his first acquaintance with that interesting section of country, so long the scene of his labors in later years. June 22d, 1811, he preached in the Dreisbach church, on Acts v. 31; on the 23d in Youngmanstown, now Mifflinburg, on Acts xxvi. 28; in the afternoon of the same day in Longstown, now New Berlin, on 2 Peter i. 19, and in the even-

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<sup>1</sup> Union County was formed out of part of Northumberland County, March 22d, 1813.

ing again in Mifflinburg, on 1 Cor. xvi. 13. He now immediately returned to his charge in York County, and continued his labors there.

In the fall of 1811 he made a second visit to Buffalo Valley, and remained there from October the 17th to the 24th. During this visit he preached at Anspach's school-house, Dieffenbacher's school-house, White Deer school-house, Dreisbach's church, Youngmanstown, Longstown, Aaronsburg, and Brush Valley. On the 28th he was at home again in his charge.

A strong effort was now made by the churches in Buffalo and neighboring Valleys to secure the permanent services of Mr. Fries; while his charge in York County manifested an equal anxiety to retain him. The following spring the former made out a call to him, and sent it by the hands of Father Brown, an Elder of the Dreisbach church, to the Synod convened in Philadelphia, April 27th, 1812, at the same time requesting Synod to send him to them. "As, however, his present congregations did not wish to part with him," a committee was appointed "to take the subject into consideration, and report on it to-morrow."<sup>1</sup> Next day, the committee reported, "that in their opinion it would be best for Mr. Fries to leave his present congregations, and accept of the call from the congregations at Youngmanstown. This report was unanimously adopted."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Fries had from the first placed himself in the

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Synod, 1812, translated by Dr. Fisher, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 54.

hands of Synod in regard to this call, desiring that that body should decide the matter for him; and he now cheerfully acquiesced in their decision, and at once accepted the call. Accordingly, as soon as his term of two years, for which he had bound himself to his present charge, had expired, he prepared for a removal to his new field of labor. The people in Buffalo Valley, while they sympathized with those congregations which would lose his services, rejoiced at their success.

It was a severe trial for Mr. Fries to leave his people in York County. Many of them had been his warm friends before he commenced his studies; their sympathies were with him during his period of probation and preparation; and now their confidence and love towards him had been still further increased during the two years he had served them as candidate. Besides this, he had a Lutheran colleague, the Rev. John Herbst, with whom he was very intimate, and from whom he separated with much regret. They kept up a friendly correspondence for a considerable time after Mr. Fries was laboring in Buffalo Valley. These letters, so full of confidence, show how intimate was their friendship and how pleasant their intercourse.

Meanwhile, Mr. Fries saw that it was "not good for a man to be alone," and selected for himself a partner for life. On the 14th of May, 1812, he was joined in the bonds of holy matrimony with Miss Catharine Graef, of York County, Pa.

Early in June, Mr. John Reber,<sup>1</sup> an Elder in the

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<sup>1</sup> A warm and stanch friend of the Church and of her min-

Dreisbach church, left home with his team and proceeded to York County to bring up the new minister. Often have we seen this worthy man, in his old age, renew his youth, while he related in the most circumstantial manner the varied events of this eventful journey down into a strange country with much anxiety, and back again with a precious load and a glad heart.

Having arrived safely in Youngmanstown with his family, Mr. Fries entered upon his duties in this new field on the 17th of June, 1812. Wide indeed was the door open to him, and on all sides lay much land to be possessed. His field extended east and west from Brush Valley and the lower end of Penn's Valley to Bloomsburg on the North Branch, and up and down the Susquehanna from Muncy to Selinsgrove.

Mr. Fries having now been three years a candidate, was again examined, which being satisfactory, he was solemnly ordained at the meeting of Synod at Frederick, Md., May 18, 1813.

At first his regular charge was composed of Mifflinburg, Dreisbach's, New Berlin, Aaronsburg, and Brush Valley. Besides these, however, he preached at many other points in school-houses, gradually laying the foundation for future congregations. There were also a number of churches east and west of the Susquehanna which were often vacant for years, which he visited two, four, and six times a

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isters, whose house was always open to God's servants, and who, for his generous hospitality and simple-hearted piety, is held in grateful remembrance by all who knew him. — D. Y. H.

year; and at various times held catechetical instructions, confirmations, and communions. Thus we find that June 8th, 1816, he confirmed young persons, and administered the Holy Supper of the Lord to forty-two persons in the Muncy church. He also preached frequently there during the previous year 1815. He held catechization, confirmation, and communion again in the same church in 1821. He frequently preached in Bloomsburg, and other places in Columbia County, previous to 1815, when Rev. Jacob Dieffenbach took charge there. January 15th, 1816, he confirmed twenty-seven persons, and again in 1818 also twenty-seven, and May 6th, 1820, again twenty-seven persons, at Eschbach's school-house. April 29th, 1820, he confirmed twenty-six persons, and May 11th, 1822, again nineteen persons, in Selinsgrove. May 4th, 1822, he confirmed fourteen persons in Salem's church. March 4th, 1822, he confirmed eighteen persons in St. John's church, in Northumberland County, and administered the Lord's Supper to fifty-seven communicants. June 3d, 1820, he confirmed sixteen persons in Milton. May 8th, 1819, he confirmed twenty-three persons at Hassinger's church. May 3d, 1823, he confirmed eight persons in White Deer; and May 19th, of the same year, ten persons in Sugar Valley.

This furnishes some idea of the vast field over which Mr. Fries had to travel between 1812 and 1823; and shows us what an amount of labor he performed outside of the bounds of his regular charge. In 1815 alone, he baptized two hundred

and twenty-four children; and from another record we learn that from the beginning of his ministry in 1810 till the end of the year 1817, he baptized in all twelve hundred and nineteen souls. The same year he confirmed seventy-nine persons. In the year 1813 he added to the Church by confirmation one hundred and eighteen souls. In the year 1820 he confirmed the same number. In 1819 he confirmed one hundred and sixteen, and baptized one hundred and eighty-eight. In 1821 he reports two hundred and thirty-one baptisms, one hundred and seventy-five confirmations, and one thousand two hundred and five communicants. In 1827 he reports two hundred and ninety-seven baptisms, and in some of the preceding and succeeding years not many less. During some years unfortunately he omitted his report. If it were possible to sum up the complete statistics of his ministry, it would show a most astonishing result. Some other years he confirmed not many less; and his funerals and marriages are in proportion. It must be remembered that this was at a time when many of the congregations he served were yet comparatively small.

In 1818, when we have the first report in the Minutes of the names of the congregations composing his charge, we have the following: 1. Mifflinburg; 2. New Berlin; 3. Dreisbach or Michael's, in Union County; 4. Aaronsburg; 5. Brush Valley, in Centre County; 6. Eschbach's, in Northumberland County; and 7. Zion's, in Columbia County. In 1819 he reports also Christ's and Salem's churches, in Union County, and Milton, in Northumberland

County. In 1820 he reports Selinsgrove as belonging to his charge; in 1823 White Deer; in 1826 Lewisburg and Hartleton. Some of these he supplied regularly for one and more years; and gradually those most remote from Mifflinburg, where he resided, were towards the latter part of his life joined with other charges; still, as may be seen, his field was always very extensive, and remained so till the day of his death.

He organized a number of congregations, such as Lewisburg, where he began about this time to preach in the school-house, and held the first communion with six members.

Mr. Fries's first wife, by whom he had two children, having died, he was married a second time, on the 27th of September, 1814, to Miss Susanna Graef, who survived him, and by whom he had eleven children, some of which are still living in Union County, Pa.

In 1818, Mr. Fries received an urgent call from York County, from the same churches which he had served in 1810 and 1811, being south of York, in the vicinity of Shrewsbury. This call came before Synod which met at Carlisle on the 6th of September in that year. Agreeably to the request of Mr. Fries, "whose congregations earnestly begged that he should not leave them," Synod appointed a committee of five "to inquire whether or not he ought to accept the call from York County." Thus, as in the case of his first call to Union County, did he place himself in the hands of Synod, desiring that his post of duty in the case might be pointed



out by an impartial judgment. Next day, the committee reported that, "after they had considered all the circumstances on both sides, they saw that, in regard to the personal interests of Mr. Fries, there was nothing that could incline him one way or the other, and that, therefore, the committee had to look only to the circumstances of the congregations in both charges. They were satisfied, they say, from reliable information, that should Mr. Fries be removed from his present charge, strife and distractions in the congregations would be the consequence, and Synod would suffer in the respect and confidence of the members. If he remain, it will, it is true, be very disagreeable to the people in York County. Yet this evil cannot be avoided without creating a greater one. It was therefore recommended that Mr. Fries remain where he is, and accordingly so resolved by the Synod."<sup>1</sup>

Thus did Mr. Fries labor in peace and with success. Satan, however, loves to disturb a Paradise. We find, accordingly, that soon after sore troubles came, especially into the Mifflinburg congregation. Some time during the summer of 1819, several malicious persons circulated an evil report concerning him. Strife and mischief were awakened in the congregation, and a very formidable party arrayed itself against him. Solomon has truly said, "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water;" and so the trouble increased, until it became so formidable as to threaten a breaking up of the pastoral relation between him and his congregations. We

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Synod, 1818, pp. 10, 13.

find, in the Synodical Minutes of that year (Sept. 5, 1819,) the following: "The committee appointed to investigate the affairs of Mr. Fries and the Church in and around Selinsgrove, report: That they are of opinion that Mr. Fries ought to leave his present congregations, and take charge of the eight congregations at Middle Creek, and for the following reasons: 1. Because the principal congregation at Mifflinburg is in a greatly unsettled condition, and Mr. Fries cannot easily restore peace. 2. Because, on the other hand, the eight congregations which have called Mr. Fries are unanimously in favor of him. Hence, it is the judgment of the committee that the matter of accepting the call of those congregations ought to be placed before him for his decision."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Fries, having returned from Synod, determined to make an effort to restore peace in the divided congregation of Mifflinburg, and, above all, to show himself innocent in the matter of those evil reports which had been circulated in regard to him, and out of which the strife seems to have grown. He accordingly assembled the elders from all his principal congregations, namely, Penn's Valley, Brush Valley, New Berlin, Dreisbach's, and Mifflinburg, before whom he invited his accusers to appear. This meeting took place Oct. 18th, 1819. In their report, they say: "Rev. Fries, the complainant, appeared properly before us. His charges were as follows: That he had been grossly injured by

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<sup>1</sup> "Dass es dem Herrn Fries in die Wahl sollte gestellt werden, die acht Gemeinen anzunehmen."—Minutes, 1819, p. 16.

several members of the Mifflinburg congregation, who reported that on Easter Sunday he had conducted himself as if he were intoxicated. Those complained against did not appear to justify themselves. Hence, we conclude that Rev. Fries is not guilty of that which was charged against him, and we pronounce him innocent.”<sup>1</sup>

Though not at once, yet gradually, peace was measurably restored. Embers from the former fire, however, still slumbered in the ashes, from which now and then, during a number of years, new fires of strife were kindled. Thus did the congregation learn from bitter experience (as many others have done before and since) how much easier it is to let an evil spirit in, than it is to drive it out. Alas! that it should require so many years of strife and sorrow to teach congregations the lesson which is so beautifully set down in the Holy Scriptures: “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”—Eph. iv. 31, 32.

For some years Father Fries was deprived of sight. He refused to take medicine in his last sickness, saying that he wished to die in the full possession of his reason. His illness was short, and of a

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<sup>1</sup> Signed Adam Harper, President; Adam Neidig, Secretary; John Brown, Henry Herbst, John Ziegler, John Philip Meyer, Fred. Gutelius, John Ray, Sebastian Wittmer, Elias Youngman, John Dreisbach, Elders.

very singular character. In July, 1839, he cut a corn on his toe, when a kind of mortification took place, spreading gradually, with intense pain, until it reached his knee. Here it remained seated for some time, the pain having almost entirely ceased; when suddenly it commenced spreading again, affecting his whole body, and terminating his life on the 9th day of October, in the same year, with very little, if any, suffering from some time in August. He is buried in Mifflinburg, Union County, Pa.<sup>1</sup>

The grave of Mr. Fries is marked by a slab of marble bearing the following inscription:

Hier ruhet

JOST HEINRICH FRIES,

Wurde geboren den 24ten April, 1777; im Kreis von Westpfahlen, im Herzogthum Nassau, Dillenburg, Amt Driedorf im Dorf Güsternhain, und kam nach America Aug. 20, 1803. Er verheirathete sich mit Catharina Gräf, May 14, 1812, und zeuchten 2 Kinder, verheirathete sich nachher mit Susanna Gräf, Sept. 20, 1814. Zeuchten 11 Kinder, und starb Oct. 9, 1839, in Mifflinburg, Union County, Pa. Alt 62 Jahre, 5 Monate, und 16 Tage.

Hier will ich nun lange wohnen.

Meine Lieben, gute Nacht,

Eure Treu wird Gott belohnen,

Die ihr habt an mir vollbracht;

Allesamt ihr Anverwandten,

Gute Freunde und Bekannten,

Lebet wohl zu guter Nacht!

Gott sei Dank, es ist vollbracht.

It was a calm summer evening when I stood at his grave. The spot is beautiful. The graveyard

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Thomas Reber.

lies along a slope, somewhat elevated above the town, which lies immediately in front; beyond it, west and east, extends one of the finest valleys in Pennsylvania. To the west, in the distance, are the jutting nob's; and to the north, the broad, blue side of the mountains, with quiet nooks between; and, far as the eye can reach, in the northeast, are the breaks in the mountains, with the broad levels between, which indicate the course of the noble Susquehanna. Thus does his quiet grave still overlook the wide scene of his labors, while he has gone to await the final issues of all his care, as they shall gather around him in the resurrection of the just.

If the question be put to any of those who knew Mr. Fries personally, what there was strikingly peculiar about him, all will answer: "His extraordinary memory." Almost any number of instances are still recollected, which show him to have been gifted in this respect far beyond what is common. In the latter part of his life he could refer to every meeting of Synod which he had attended,—and he was present at most of them,—could tell all who preached successively, their texts, the divisions in their sermons, and the main thoughts presented. He could tell all the places where he had preached, and the text, together with the circumstances and the incidents. He could mention the name of any child he had baptized, when it was baptized, how old it was, and the name of its parents. In short, his memory seemed to retain a faithful record of

the acts of his life, and most of what he ever read, especially in the sphere of history.<sup>1</sup>

Having such an excellent memory, he was a very ready speaker. He spoke only extemporaneously, using neither note nor skeleton; abounding in allusions to facts and incidents in his own experience, and in sacred and profane history. He loved to preach, and always became interested in his subject himself, and thus also always interested his hearers. He was often blunt and personal, even to a fault; instances of which tradition will preserve sufficiently long. It is said by philosophers, that an extraordinary memory, and a good, well-balanced judgment are rarely found in the same person. Mr. Fries, with all his excellencies, was an illustration of the truth of this remark. He lacked that nice judgment, quick sense of propriety, and calm prudence, which are so necessary in a public man. He was, indeed, harmless as a dove, but he did not unite with this the wisdom of a serpent, as our Saviour directs. Though this peculiarity in his character was, at times, as a ripple in the stream of his own life, and a cause of offence to others, yet the patient, primitive spirit of the community in the midst of which he labored scarcely felt this fault in the presence of the super-abounding goodness which formed the main current of his being.

Mr. Fries was unnecessarily open and free with his political views. He not only argued readily on this subject in private circles, but often introduced

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. D. Willers, in the *Christliche Zeitschrift*, Nov. 30th, 1839.

political matters, with more or less plainness, into the pulpit, referring even to candidates and parties. He also wrote numerous articles for the papers during the heat of contests, — anonymously, it is true, yet still so that their parentage was recognized by many. This was one of his weaknesses, which his friends always regretted, but which he was never able to see in the true light.

He was quick and active in soul and body. He was a man of ardent temperament; but when he was misled by it to do aught hastily and inconsiderately, his penitence and self-humiliation were immediately manifest, and he was ready in the acknowledgment of his rashness both to God and men.<sup>1</sup>

He was by nature and by grace exceedingly kind-hearted, which he manifested in great affection towards his family, in the grateful recollection of the kindnesses of his friends, and in quiet acts of charity towards the needy. "We know of more than one instance," says one who knew him well, "in which his disinterested benevolence conferred effectual help to the destitute."

Mr. Fries was remarkably open, honest, and true. His word could be depended upon. He hated all sham and hypocrisy to such a degree that he was constantly in danger of falling into a blunt frankness, without giving due attention to that suavity of manner which is to an open heart what the fragrance is to an open flower. He was fearless in his

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Samuel Güteli, in the *Christ. Zeitschrift*, Oct. 28th, 1839.

preaching, hewing the Agags of sin to pieces with equal firmness whether they were high or low, learned or unlearned, rich or poor. He was very zealous against any innovations. He reprov'd with equal severity the spirit of fanaticism in the Church, which would set aside the divine order, and open sin, which would disgrace it, and rob it of its true power and glory.

His heart was in the Church of his fathers. As we have seen, he implicitly submitted to its authority, and desired always to be found moving peacefully in its order. Few men attended the Synodical and Classical Meetings more regularly, and few found so much real pleasure in so doing. These were his "sweet and pleasant days;" and his heart bounded in these great assemblies of the Church, like as when a child, long absent, returns to the homestead, and meets the whole family together. From them he returned happy to his flocks, his face shining with the gladness that fell upon it there.

We have seen how his love to the Church led him to care for vacant congregations. He visited them far and near. He catechized the children in churches that had lain vacant for years; and he felt repaid for all his exposure and toil when, on Saturday, he had gathered a flock of blooming youth around the altar to make their vows and receive the solemn rite of confirmation, and on Sabbath handed to them, and their grateful parents, the emblems of our Saviour's passion and death. There are many, who, now that he is dead and gone to his reward,



can still call up such like joyful scenes, and who cherish the memory of them in connection with the holiest associations of their early life. To such we would say,—because *he* can say it to them no more, —“Give unto the Lord thanksgiving, and pay your vows unto the Most High!”

## REV. JAMES ROSS REILY.

1788 — 1844.

IN that period of the history of the German Reformed Church in America to which belongs the honor of laying the foundations of its first literary and theological institutions, Mr. Reily acted a prominent and important part. Among other zealous men, by whose labors, under God's blessing, those agencies of lasting good were originated, he deserves to be held in grateful remembrance.

James Ross Reily, son of John and Elizabeth Reily, was born in Meyerstown, then Dauphin, but now Lebanon County, Pa., October 31st, 1788. His father was a lawyer, but devoted the latter part of his life to teaching. When about twelve years of age, in 1800, his mother died; at which time he was placed under the care and in the service of Rev. Dr. Hendel, then pastor at Tulpehocken — Mrs. Hendel being his aunt. Here he remained three years, during which time no doubt many impressions were made upon his youthful mind which had much to do in silently shaping his future life. In 1803, he bound himself for six years to Frederick A. Shultz, of Womelsdorf, to learn merchandising. He did not, however, serve out his whole time. Having meanwhile felt the impulses of a higher mission, he

made up his mind to prepare himself for the holy ministry, and having been released from his former obligation in 1809, he commenced his studies with Dr. Becker, of Baltimore. "I pursued my studies," he says, "under many trials and difficulties on account of poverty; nevertheless, I persevered, with the blessing of God, and completed my course in 1812." Of how many men, good and true and useful, is this the touching story!

Having made application for examination and license at the Synod of Philadelphia, 1812, a committee was appointed for that purpose, by which he was examined and licensed, in the name of Synod, in October of the same year.<sup>1</sup> He had already received a call from the churches in Lykens Valley, Dauphin County, Pa.,—at whose instance also Synod had appointed the committee to examine him,—which he accepted, and preached his introductory sermon in the Salem church, January 1st, 1813. His field east of the Susquehanna was sufficiently large, but the congregations at Selinsgrove and Row's, west of the river and about twenty miles higher up, being vacant, he also supplied them for about six months, when he passed them into the hands of Rev. Isaac Gerhart, who at that time took the pastoral care of the whole charge to which they belonged.

At the meeting of Synod at Frederick, in May 1813, three urgent petitions were received from destitute congregations in the State of North Caro-

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<sup>1</sup>Syn. Min., 1812, pp. 53, 54. His ordination took place in 1817. See Min., p. 12.—D. Y. H.

lina, in which they most earnestly entreated Synod to send them a minister, or at least some one to visit them. These churches were located in the counties of Guilford, Orange, Randolph, Lincoln, and Rowan. Synod was moved by these petitions, and felt anxious to afford relief. Dr. Becker, with whom Mr. Reily had pursued his studies, rose and in a very touching way pleaded for the brethren in North Carolina, and stated that his former pupil desired to serve the church in that mission. Mr. Reily was appointed. Dr. Becker then proposed that they commend the young missionary to God. Synod knelt in prayer, and thus set him apart for his mission with its special intercession and blessing.<sup>1</sup>

Young Reily, full of zeal, and not without some fondness for adventure, began his journey to the South, August 23d. Travelling at that time had much more of a primitive character than it has since acquired. He went on horseback. One incident of the journey is worth recording. One day, in the afternoon, he lost his way, and got off from the main road. Night overtook him before he was able to find his way back, and he called at a cabin, where he asked and obtained permission to stay for the night. There was no one there but an old, rough-looking woman, who pretended to be living alone. Having attended to his horse himself as well as the means of the place could afford, and himself partaken of such homely fare as the old woman furnished, he ascended the ladder in the

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<sup>1</sup>Syn. Min., 1813, p. 59.

corner, and found above a rudely-furnished room partitioned off under the roof. He retired, having, however, taken the precaution first to insert the blade of his knife above the latch of his door. This was naturally suggested to him by the loneliness of the place in which he was to spend the night. Lying awake, busied with such thoughts as we may readily suppose would engage one's mind in such circumstances, he heard about midnight that two men had entered the cabin below, and were in subdued conversation with his hostess. Soon after he heard them creep up the ladder, come to his door, and try the latch. Finding it secured, they called, and demanded entrance. Meanwhile he was on his feet in readiness. He refused to open—they insisted. At length he told them he was ready to receive them and opened the door. As the door opened, they saw by the dim light of the moon that he stood in the middle of the room with a pistol presented in each hand. They immediately turned and hastened down the ladder. He followed down, but they had already left the house. He charged the old woman with conspiracy, and designs of robbery or murder. She stoutly denied the charge, but could give no satisfactory account of the men who had made their appearance in such a suspicious way. He did not retire again; and, thanking God for his deliverance from what he believed to be “bloody men,” he left as soon as the day dawned. He afterwards heard on the way that the cabin where he had stayed was in a noted “black corner;” and it was not doubted that the old woman had be-

trayed his presence to those men that he might be robbed, and perhaps murdered, since "dead men tell no tales."

Having in due time reached his field of labor, he devoted himself diligently to the work of his mission—preaching, catechizing the young, and visiting house after house and point after point. In a little over three months after he got on the ground he had catechized and confirmed one hundred and sixty-nine, and baptized one hundred and thirteen, besides performing a very great amount of other pastoral labor. On the 19th of December he left on his return journey, and soon after entered upon his duties again in Lykens Valley.

Synod allowed him \$30 a month "besides the incidental support he might receive from the congregations"—and out of this he had to pay all his travelling expenses. It is said that this Mission suggested the necessity of a Board of Domestic Missions, and set in motion influences which ultimately led to its organization.

He now labored again in his charge, which was very large, including all the valleys that run back east of the Susquehanna from the Blue Mountains to Shamokin, or Sunbury. He was possessed of an active spirit, which, with all his labors in those quiet valleys, seemed still to be restless after some adventures more exciting. Soon after his return to his charge, from the South, while the late war with England was raging, he was seized with the patriotic desire of mingling with the scenes of the tented field. He made an attempt to form a company of

volunteers, of which he was himself to be captain ; but as the war was now drawing to a close, and the necessity for recruits was not urgent, he followed the advice of his friends and abandoned the project. From 1816 to 1818, he was a member from Dauphin County in the Legislature, though he did not resign his charge, his congregations having been meanwhile supplied from other sources.

About the close of 1818, he received a call from Hagerstown, Md., and some affiliated congregations, which he accepted, and on the 1st of Jan., 1819, preached his introductory sermon in his new charge. On the 31st of August of that year he was married to Miss Mary Orndorf. This was, however, destined to be a brief union : she died Feb. 29th, 1820, only six months after their marriage.

His health was somewhat precarious after he became pastor in Hagerstown. On the 26th of January, 1820, he was taken with a very severe hemorrhage of the lungs, which lasted forty-eight hours. Though greatly reduced, he recovered sufficiently to resume his duties. Yet it became apparent to him, in the course of a few years, that his constitution was not able to endure the regular labors of his important charge. Accordingly he resigned, and on the 24th of April, 1825, preached his farewell sermon to his people, among whom he had been very popular and useful.

In addition to his failing health, there was another circumstance which led to his resignation just at this time. The Theological Seminary having just lately been established, and there being a

great need both of funds and books, the Board of Trustees of that institution appointed Mr. Reily an agent to go to Europe for the purpose of securing such aid as the churches in the Fatherland might bestow. Taking a deep interest in the Seminary, and hoping also that his health might be benefited by the voyage, he accepted the agency.

Of his voyage, travels, labors, and success in this mission, we have the best account in the report which he laid before the Synod of 1827. To this report the reader is respectfully referred. It is found in the Minutes of 1827, pp. 39-43.

Mr. Reily arrived safely at Philadelphia, November 16th, 1826, having been absent about one year and a half. From the item-account of money and books received, published in the Minutes of 1827, it is evident that he was both diligent and successful. The contributions in money which he received in Holland, Rhine Prussia, Würtemberg, Switzerland, Heidelberg, and Frankfort, amounted to 15,196 florins and 26 kreutzers—equal to \$6078.60. In Leipsic, Berlin, and Bremen, he received 826 rix-dollars and 31 groschen—equal to \$620.95—in all, \$6699.55. Besides this, he collected several thousand volumes of books, which he received as gifts. With a part of the money collected he purchased other books, which, together with freight, in gathering and shipping them, amounted to \$1653.51—leaving still \$5046.04, in money, for the Seminary. Thus the infant institution, and especially its library, received very important help by means of his successful mission.



Besides thus aiding the Seminary, he was himself much benefited in the temporary improvement of his health. He soon after received a call from the congregation at York, which he accepted, and preached his introductory sermon there April 1st, 1827. Here his labors were greatly blest. He confirmed at one time 104 members. His health, however, again gave way in the course of a few years, and he was at length compelled to resign his charge, which he did July 20th, 1831. Thus ended his ministerial career.

His disease being pulmonary, which preaching was of course ever directly irritating, he had more freedom from its inconvenience after he ceased from active ministerial labors. Thus his system, though broken down, still sustained itself for some years. He was now necessitated to devote himself to a secular calling, but still manifested a warm interest in the congregation and in the Church at large. In 1834, he was Register of York County. On the 10th of June of the same year, he was a second time married, to Mrs. Louisa McClellan, by whom he had two sons,—these, as also his widow, are still living. One of the sons is engaged in the active duties of the holy ministry. In the latter part of his life, Mr. Reily held the office of Justice of the Peace, and kept a bookstore in York.

His life having ebbed away slowly during several years, his end came to him when he was looking for it daily, having been confined to bed about one year before his death. He died in peace, at his residence in York, Pa., March 18th, 1844, in the 56th

year of his age. He is buried in the graveyard on Beaver Street, where a neat and modest stone marks his grave.

Mr. Reily was what one who knew him well calls "an original man" — one who would be noticed among others on account of his many marked characteristics. In person, he was tall, stately, and commanding. His social qualities were very excellent. He attracted persons to himself, and left warm friends behind him wherever he had been stationed. He was quick in all his movements,—active alike in body and in mind.

He abounded in geniality and cheerfulness. He had a rich vein of innocent wit and humor, in which, on proper occasions, he indulged freely. He had also a rare gift in quick repartee, which he could easily develop into spontaneous sarcasm; yet this last, when indulged in, was so relieved by his blandness of countenance and openness of heart as seldom to give offence. Of his witty repartees, tradition still remembers many.

The characteristics just referred to are well illustrated by a little incident which once occurred on the way to Synod. A number of ministers travelling together stopped at noon to dine at a public house. It so happened that a certain Mr. E——, a Lutheran minister, who was a deeply-dyed rationalist, was dining at the same place. Knowing Mr. Reily, he came up to him with a pompous and bantering air, with a view of drawing him into an argument, thereby to show his learning, and especially his nice powers of reason before the company. Drawing

himself up into an attitude of great dignity, he addressed Mr. Reily thus: "What is reason? Please give me a correct and full definition of reason." "Oh, well," said Mr. Reily, while his eye was beaming with humor, "reason, reason is something which one takes by the nose and turns any way one listeth." Certainly the very wisest and deepest definition of that *thing* which rationalists call reason that can well be given. It is scarcely necessary to add that the very deep and learned discussion on the subject of reason and its religion was thus suddenly brought to a close, amid the half-suppressed smiles of all present.

Mr. Reily was a man of much decision and great perseverance. What he began he carried through by an unwearied application of his varied talents, industry, and prudent management. He was active in the judicatories and benevolent boards of the Church, as well as in his pastorates.

In the pulpit, he was grave and earnest. As a preacher, he was ready, fluent, and often truly eloquent. We recollect hearing of his fame as a preacher in our boyhood, when he resided in Hagerstown. All over that region of country he was known and spoken of as a very popular pulpit orator; and the ancient people about Hagerstown still speak of his labors with gratitude and affection.

## REV. JOHN HENRY GERHART.

1782 — 1846.

THE parents of Rev. John Henry Gerhart were Peter Gerhart and his wife Christiana, whose maiden name was Hunsberger. He was born December 23d, in the year of our Lord 1782, near the Indian Creek church in Franconia Township, Montgomery County, Pa. His father was a farmer, and he also spent the early part of his life on the farm.

In the twelfth year of his age he lost his father, who died suddenly; in the evening he retired enjoying his usual health, in the morning he was found a corpse in his bed. Young Gerhart was deeply impressed by this sudden bereavement in his tender years. While yet a youth he became a member of the German Reformed church of Indianfield, where his father's family worshipped, having been instructed and confirmed by Rev. Theobald Faber, then of New Goshenhoppen, who temporarily supplied this congregation after it was left vacant by the resignation of Rev. Nicholas Pomp.

Mr. Gerhart early manifested a desire for knowledge, and was diligent in the improvement of his mind. He was very fond of music, and he early cultivated his taste in that way, so that he became

not only a good singer, but also played well upon the piano and organ. He had a desire also to be a school-teacher, and accordingly prepared himself for that profession, which he pursued during eight years in the earlier part of his life, after his eighteenth year. He was very successful as a teacher, and very much esteemed by parents and children.

His thoughts were quietly drawn towards the ministry in early youth; yet obstacles being in his way, he had not been able hitherto to bring himself fully to a decision in regard to it. A strange dream — but why call it strange, since God of old whispered to men in dreams, and has the same access to our spirits now — I will therefore say a solemn dream was the occasion of bringing him to a decision. He dreamed that his departed mother came to him in the night, clothed in white garments, holding up to him an open Bible, and pointing to the passage: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” (Mark xvi. 15.) Solomon says, “A dream cometh through the multitude of business.” His thoughts had no doubt been earnestly engaged on this point, and now in the visions of the night, whether by mental reproduction or by the gentle suggestion of the divine Spirit, the subject of his thoughts embodied itself in this solemn mystical scene. He regarded it as the beckoning of an unseen hand, and “was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision;” but thought more earnestly than ever on the subject of devoting himself to the service of Christ in the work of the holy ministry, and soon after came to a final decision so to do.

He was about twenty-six years of age when he commenced his theological studies with Rev. Dr. Samuel Helffenstein, then of Philadelphia, with whom he remained about three years. He was a diligent student, and made good progress.

At the meeting of Synod, April 27th, 1813, being then in the thirtieth year of his age, he presented himself for examination. His qualifications were found to be adequate, and he was accordingly licensed as a candidate; which license was renewed to him from year to year, for three years, according to the requirement of the "Synodal Ordnung," till the meeting of Synod held at Easton, Pa., April 23d, 1815, when it was directed that he be ordained, receiving at the same time the testimony that "he had annually furnished Synod with good testimonials from his congregations as to the manner in which he had discharged his ministerial duties."<sup>1</sup> He was accordingly ordained on the 27th by his reverend instructor, Dr. Helffenstein, and the Rev. J. W. Dechant.

At the time that he was licensed, he also presented to Synod a call from the Bedford charge, in Bedford County, which was approved by Synod and accepted by him.

In the fall of 1811, while he was yet engaged in his studies, Mr. John Schell, Sen., of Schellsburg, came to Dr. Helffenstein's in Philadelphia, if possible to procure a young man to minister to them. Previous to that time that region had been much afflicted with wandering vagabond pretenders.<sup>2</sup> It

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<sup>1</sup> See Minutes of Synod, translated by Dr. Fisher, pp. 58-67.

<sup>2</sup> "Herum-läufer." (Spangenberg.)

was in fact missionary ground; and the good man went home greatly rejoiced by the promise that young Gerhart would visit them that winter, which he had engaged to do.

He was at Bedford over one year as a single man, when, on the 5th of June, 1813, he was joined in holy marriage with Miss Elizabeth Leidy, daughter of Mr. Jacob Leidy, of Montgomery County, Pa., and sister of Rev. George Leidy.

He resided at Bedford, which was the centre of his operations. Here there was at that time a small old log-church, owned jointly by the Reformed and Lutherans; but it had served its day, and was no longer fit to be used as a place of worship. He accordingly preached in the court-house for a number of years, until the people were able to erect a new house of worship, which was done in union with the Lutherans, after he had labored long enough to gather the scattered members and strengthen them for the work. He himself contributed \$200 out of his own private funds for the erection of the church. Besides this, he showed his devotion to the interest of his charge by living in part from his own funds during the first year of his ministry among the people of Bedford County.

He also preached at Schellsburg, Friend's Cove, in a small log-church, Greenfield, Bob's Creek, on Tennent's Creek, about nine miles north of Bedford, and also about ten miles still farther in the same valley. He also preached at Yellow Creek, and organized a congregation in Morrison's Cove. He also occasionally visited Conemaugh, Dry Ridge,

Cumberland in Maryland, and other remote and destitute places.

Many of his preaching-places were only school-houses when he began; though some of them grew into interesting congregations, which built convenient churches, under his ministry. When he began to preach in the Schellsburg church, the benches were nothing but logs laid across the floor, sitting upon which the worshippers were no doubt as devout, and their service as acceptable to Him who was born in a stable, as that which is offered from cushioned seats.

In his first statistical report or record, in 1813, he reports that he baptized fifty-five, confirmed fifty-seven, and administered the Holy Communion to one hundred and fifty-one. In 1825, which is his last *full* report in that charge, he reports two hundred and six baptisms, eighty-one confirmations, and five hundred and seventy-five communicants. Thus, in twelve years, the communing membership of his charge had increased from one hundred and fifty-one to five hundred and seventy-five. From this report it appears that he was very successful in building up the Church in Bedford County.

Mr. Gerhart preached principally in the German language. One account says that he did not preach English at all. **This**, however, must be a mistake; as his son in a letter expressly says that they have many of his sermons, both German and English, written out in full. This fact is conclusive evidence that he preached in both languages.

He remained in his first charge seventeen years.



In 1830 he left Bedford, and removed to his early home in Montgomery County. His reasons for leaving were partly because he felt that his labors were too arduous; and partly because his wife was sickly, and would rather go back to live among her friends. Besides, the Rev. Geo. Wack, who was a cousin to Mrs. Gerhart, proposed giving up to him one of his congregations—Hilltown, namely, which he thought would suit his strength better. He moved on a farm which his father-in-law gave him, some three or four miles from this congregation.

Mr. Gerhart left Bedford with great reluctance; and the people, among whom he had labored so long and so faithfully, were just as sorry to part with him as he was to leave them. He preached at Hilltown a number of years, but was not so successful there as at Bedford. He was in favor of temperance, and made temperance addresses, which raised part of his congregation against him, and he finally resigned. After this he continued to live on the farm, and ceased preaching, except occasionally by way of assisting his ministerial brethren in the immediate vicinity.

The last time Mr. Gerhart mingled in public with his ministerial brethren was at the Synod of Carlisle, in the fall of 1846. Here he was present in good health, and participated in the proceedings of that body. No one could prophesy that his end was so near. Shortly after returning home, death met him in a very sad and sudden way. On the morning of Nov. 11th, 1846, while engaged in hitching a horse into a white-covered vehicle, the

animal took fright, and ran over a fence beside a gate, crushing him against the post, and throwing him violently upon the ground, which produced internal injury. No medical aid could avail. He died in an hour after the sad event. His mind was unaffected by the injury, and he spake sensibly to the last. He died with the glorious hope of a firm believer. His last words were: "O come, Lord Jesus!" A sweet smile beamed from his countenance to the last; it became fixed with his features in the serene composure of death, and he bore it with him into the grave.

Notwithstanding the extreme inclemency of the weather on the day of his burial, a large concourse of people followed his remains to its resting-place. The venerable Rev. Samuel Helffenstein, D. D., delivered a suitable discourse at the house, from Luke xii. 37: "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." The aged Rev. George Wack spoke appropriately at the grave. The Rev. John Naille afterwards delivered a solemn funeral sermon in the church, in the German language, from 2 Timothy ii. 6-8; and Rev. Albert Helffenstein closed with a short, earnest address in English.<sup>1</sup> Thus solemnly was the dead buried, and thus were the living warned to be always ready, because at an hour when we think not the Son of man cometh.

Mr. Gerhart lies buried in "Leidy's graveyard,"

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<sup>1</sup>See German Reformed Messenger, Nov. 25, 1846.

about two miles from Indian Creek church, beside the Bethlehem turnpike, in Montgomery County. His grave is decently walled around with brick, upon which rests a large marble slab; from this rise four short marble columns, upon which rests another marble slab bearing the following inscription :

In Memory of  
REV. JOHN HENRY GERHART,  
Who was born December the 23d, 1782,  
And departed this life November the 11th, 1846,  
Aged 63 years, 10 months, and 19 days.

He calls —

I come, I come at Thy command,  
And give my spirit up into Thy hand ;  
Stretch forth thine everlasting arm,  
And shield me in the last alarm.

He's here! —

The hour of my departure's come,  
I hear the voice that calls me home ;  
Now, O my God, let trouble cease,  
Now let thy servant depart in peace !

The widow of Mr. Gerhart, who has the praise of those that knew her, survived him. Their union was blessed with ten children, only one of which preceded him into the eternal world. His descendants are highly respectable and worthy members of the Church, and reside principally in Montgomery and Bucks counties.

In stature, Mr. Gerhart was rather small, and not strongly built in his physical frame. His hair was black, and in the latter part of his life began to turn a silver gray. His personal appearance was

pleasant. He was friendly, lively, and had a great deal of what is called good humor—a cheerful Christian, and an agreeable companion. He presided over his family with mildness and love, and was very successful in leaving with it the influence of his own example and spirit.

One who knew him well, says: “As a minister and pastor, Mr. Gerhart did honor to his holy office. Traces of his well-tempered, holy zeal for the salvation of souls are seen in almost every act of his ministerial life. Though but an ordinary speaker in the pulpit, he could wield his pen with power. He left hundreds of sermons which abound in substantial spiritual nourishment for the soul. His sermons are fresh and original, plain and practical, clear and comprehensive. He possessed fine exegetical talents. He seemed to me—to use a very simple way of explaining myself—as one sitting in the midst of a fruit-tree, with arms as long as its branches, plucking the fruit for himself and others.”<sup>1</sup> Such was his ready command of scriptural truth.

As a Christian, he was devout and exemplary, manifesting his love to God by love to men. His charity was seen in its numerous fruits—in relieving the poor, comforting the distressed, and reforming the wicked. He lived for God and his generation here, and has gone to live with God and the hosts of His redeemed in the kingdom of peace and love.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. J. Naille.

## REV. JOHN HELFFERICH.

1795 — 1852.

JOHN HELFFERICH, son of Rev. John Henry Helferich, was born in Weissenburg, Lehigh County, Pa., January 17th, 1795. His father—a sketch of whose life will be found in the Second Volume of this Work—came to America in 1772; and his mother, Mary Magdalene Sassamanshausen, was a granddaughter of Yost Sassamanshausen, who, in the beginning of the last century, emigrated and settled in Maxatany, Berks County, where in later years he became one of the founders of the Ziegel's and Long Swamp congregations.

John Helferich was the next to the youngest of six sons; and when none of these, agreeably to the wish of their father, could make up their minds to enter the ministry, he, as early as his twelfth year, solemnly engaged to realize his father's desire in regard to himself, and was accordingly from that time forth diligently directed in his preparatory studies by his father. In his sixteenth year, however, just after he had been confirmed, his father died. Through the assistance of his uncle, Jacob Sassamanshausen, he was enabled, in the following year, to go to Philadelphia, in company with Rev. John Züllich, where he pursued his studies for five years under Rev. Samuel Helffenstein, D. D.

After the death of his father, the consistories of five congregations held a joint meeting, and resolved that they would call a minister who would agree to serve them till young Helfferich should have finished his studies and received ordination of Synod, when he should further agree peacefully to vacate the charge. This was at once an evidence of their affection for the memory of the father, and of their confidence in the son. They elected Rev. Henry Dieffenbach, who served the congregations, agreeably to these terms, for six years, and in 1816 vacated his charge.

In the spring of 1816, while young Helfferich was yet in Philadelphia, these congregations, namely, Heidelberg, Lyntown, Lowhill and Weissenburg (which two are one congregation possessing two churches), Ziegel and Long Swamp, sent him a call, praying him as early as possible to come and serve them. Whereupon he wrote to the consistories as follows: "Beloved brethren in Christ: It rejoices my heart to see the confidence which you have placed in me; and I will always endeavor, by divine assistance, to make myself worthy of it; yet it is not in my power to take charge of any congregations before September next, since I am not yet licensed. Then, however, by the help of God's grace, I will endeavor to come to you, to serve you with all the power I possess. Should you desire it, I have permission meanwhile to visit and preach for you. The grace of God be with you."

In the autumn of this year he made application to Synod for examination and licensure, laying at the

same time his call before Synod. He was examined, licensed, and obtained permission to accept the call. Three years later he received ordination at the Synod of Lancaster.

On the 19th of April, 1818, he was married to Salome, daughter of Jacob and Mary Schwartz. As that with his wife, so his union with his congregations he regarded sacred and indissoluble; and from his licensure to the end of his life he continued to labor in the same field — except only that, in addition to those named, he served the Jerusalem church several years. His pastoral district embraced only about the half of the congregations which his father had served; yet under his care they had grown sufficiently strong to form a charge in themselves. He had also received a call from the congregation in Trexlertown, — which had belonged to his father's charge, — but he declined it, lest it should thereby weaken a charge to which it more naturally belonged.

In this charge Mr. Helfferich labored uninterruptedly for thirty-five years, amid many trials and hardships; but not without many blessings and much success. The condition in which his charge was found at his death bore testimony to his faithfulness to the interests of the Church. His field extended from the Blue Mountain, as the northern boundary of Heidelberg and Lyntown, to the Southern Mountains beyond the Long Swamp, a distance of about sixteen miles. This is a region thickly settled by wealthy inhabitants; and there is now scarcely a family to be found in all this district

that does not belong either to the Reformed or Lutheran Church. Thousands of happy people dwell here, and as often as the Sabbath returns stream towards the house of God to worship. There was a time when here, as elsewhere, the fanatical sect-spirit threatened to endanger the churches; but it was luckily repelled. About fifteen years before the death of Mr. Helfferich, several Methodist families moved to Lowhill and Weissenburg, and endeavored with great zeal, by means of meetings which they there held, to make proselytes; but wholly without success. Publicly, on the pulpit, he never attacked them; but as soon as he heard of any of his members that wavered, he visited them at their houses, and succeeded in every case to retain them in their own Church. Thus his field was preserved against those fanatical over-floodings which, in other places, devastated many a flourishing congregation.

As after the death of his father his charge was divided into two, so also, since the decease of this his son, has his charge again been formed into two charges, each of which is sufficiently large to call into activity all the ability of a pastor.

Mr. Helfferich was very conscientious in the fulfilment of all his duties. He preached and catechized, and in general attended to his duties with great regularity, scarcely suffering the worst weather to keep him from his appointments. In his sermons, he adhered closely to his text and theme. In his doctrinal discussions he followed Lampe, whose Dogmatics he had studied. He wrote out in full all



his sermons, adhering to this practice even in his last years; and in delivering them, kept close to what he had written. No one could have persuaded him to enter the pulpit without previous close study. He has left behind him a vast number of sermons. Baptisms he attended to mostly in the altar of the church, and was careful to make a full record of them in the church-book. He held confirmation every two years in each congregation, and administered the Holy Communion in each congregation twice a year. He was much beloved by his people; and although he was very decided in carrying out his plans, he did not thereby lose the love and respect of his members.

The state of religion at the death of Mr. Helfferich may be described thus: The people in general were churchly, and attached to the Reformed Faith. However, there being but poor schools, and by far too little instruction given in them, and because public worship was held in each church only once in four weeks, and in view of the general stagnation in the religious life, which too much prevailed, the people remained more or less ignorant and backward in church matters. And since Mr. Helfferich, when, a few decades ago, the Church began to tend more and more towards the subjective in the Christian life, felt himself only the more cast back on the objective, not trusting that tendency, which, when properly directed as in other portions of the Church, brought forth active and true Christian life, this movement did not take root in his congregations; and they, consequently, although

warmly attached to the Reformed Church, remained in a measure petrified and stationary.

Mr. Helfferich loved the Church with all his heart, and also manifested this love in his conduct; but his practical life, as already stated, had more of an objective than of a subjective coloring. As he loved the Church, so also did he adhere to the Synod. When, in an unfortunate hour, the Free Synod was organized, which embraced for the most part ministers and congregations from East Pennsylvania, efforts were made to persuade him to become a member of it; but he declined, and did not leave the old Synod. At this time, one of his congregations, which was united with a Lutheran congregation, (the minister of which had left the Lutheran Synod,) endeavored to induce him in a like manner to declare himself independent. Incited by this circumstance, he preached a sermon from Joshua xxiv. 15, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." By this sermon the matter was settled, and he had rest. On another occasion, at the consecration of a church, the consistory proposed to invite a certain minister of the Free Synod to participate in the solemnities; but Mr. Helfferich decidedly opposed it; and when the consistory still insisted upon it, he wrote to them the following letter: "Brethren: I am sorry to discover that, from all accounts, you still persist in having Mr. B—— invited to the consecration of your church, although you are aware that it cannot be done with my consent. To convince you that I do not wish to lord it over the congregation, but only desire order and right,

I give you the privilege, if you will absolutely have him at the consecration, also, afterwards, to elect him as your future pastor. Is it possible, that in the old Synod, which has existed almost as long as the country itself, there should not some one be found who possesses sufficient honor and ability to attend to the consecration of your church? What course I intend to pursue under these circumstances, you now learn from what I have written. I desire order and right. Yours devotedly."

Soon after Mr. Helfferich entered his charge, he purchased a property about a mile from where his father had resided. Here he arranged for himself a home, where he resided till his death. He was a warm friend of the Germans, and his house was a hospitable home for them. Ever one or more had a home with him. Thus, for example, till his two sons were grown to manhood, he kept, at different times, six very able German teachers, who were well versed in the sciences. Every poor immigrant who sought his house was cared for in the most friendly manner; and not seldom he furnished the means to poor Germans wherewith to commence business on his property. Thus he had around his house carpenters, smiths, stone-cutters, physicians, and even a chocolate manufactory. True, this gave occasion to some to reproach him, as if he had carried on all these departments of business himself, when in fact it was only a work of love to the poor whom he had assisted in an honest and honorable employment. So it was also spread abroad that he was a practical physician; and yet he never prac-

tised in this profession. Soon after he began to preach he became subject to vertigo, with which he was much afflicted for many years. He used many remedies, without a cure. Then there came to the neighborhood a celebrated homœopathic physician, who had been educated at a European university, by the name of Wösselheft, who, in a short time, effected a perfect cure. This gave him great confidence in the new healing art; and, as he had then a teacher in his house, he induced him to study the system, in order thereby to secure for himself a permanent business. Thus this physician was for some years employed to attend regularly at his house. On these occasions, Mr. Helfferich himself took lessons, and thus made himself acquainted with the system; and afterwards received a diploma from the "Homœopathic Academy" in Allentown. Although he now had his diploma, and gave to many medicine in his own house, and also used his influence to create confidence in the system, he was himself never a practising physician. In order to escape the constant applications made to him, he had his eldest son educated in Philadelphia as a homœopathic physician. He continued to labor as a minister, and did not neglect the duties of his office. The following note, addressed to Dr. Wösselheft, gives his views in regard to this matter: "Dear Friend: I would long since have sent you your books had an opportunity offered. I have read them, and, as I believe, not without benefit. I have also ordered the other books you mentioned; but whether, or when, I shall receive them, I know

not. I intend to devote such time as I can spare from my duties to this science; but how far I may progress I do not know. It is not my design to become a practising physician. I thank you for your kindness, and remain sincerely yours."

Mr. Helfferich was much beloved, not only in his own congregations, but wherever he was known. His members loved him as a father. He had many commendable characteristics. He was gifted with a very fine musical voice; which, however, he unfortunately used in public speaking in too monotonous and singing a manner. Yet it enabled him, at the same time, to speak very solemnly. He seldom preached longer than half an hour. He was very economical, and at the same time very liberal in his habits. Thus, for instance, he could become very impatient at the breaking of a pane of glass, when he was ready, the next moment, to give a poor man two or three dollars. He was, of course, often deceived by those in whom his generous nature led him to repose confidence. On one occasion, he gave a German eleven hundred dollars, wherewith to commence business, and was cheated out of nearly the whole of it. But all these instances of villany did not contract his open heart, for he also found many grateful ones among those to whom he gave kind assistance.

We cannot refrain from here giving a note of commendation which he sent on to a friend ahead of a German with whom it seems he had become too well acquainted. The reader will relish its genuine wit, and at the same time discover in the

subject to which it refers a character such as he himself has met. "If, in these days, an old candidate of theology should come to you, be so good and procure him somewhere a situation as schoolmaster. If this cannot be done, please send him on further, and, for God's sake, not back again to me. Try to drive his German foolery out of his head,—a German writes this! Like the Wandering Jew, only let him go always forward, and never back again to me."

Mr. Helfferich enjoyed good health till within about a year of his death, when, in consequence of an attack of apoplexy, he was no more able to preach. On Good Friday evening, he retired cheerful, and at eleven o'clock in the night was taken with a second apoplectic attack, when he immediately lost all consciousness. On the following morning, April 8th, 1852, he breathed his last, aged 57 years, 2 months, and 21 days. On the 11th his remains were borne to the family graveyard, where, by the side of his father, they were committed to their long repose. At the house, Rev. Mr. Knoske spoke from Proverbs x. 7: "The memory of the just is blessed." The funeral sermon was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Becker, in the Ziegel church, where, during the services, his corpse lay palled before the altar. His text was John xii. 26: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor."

During his ministry Mr. Helfferich baptized four thousand five hundred and ninety-one, confirmed

between two and three thousand, married over one thousand, and buried about fifteen hundred. One of his sons has entered the ministry,—Rev. William A. Helfferich, who now labors efficiently in part of his father's charge. Thus the family perpetuates in its bosom the sacred office.

REV. GEORGE WEISZ.<sup>1</sup>

1793 — 1859.

THE subject of this Memoir was the son of Christopher and Elizabeth Weisz. He was born in Beaver Township, Northumberland County, Pa., June 21st, 1793. Of his early childhood and youth we have no definite and reliable information, except that his spiritual interests were early and faithfully attended to by his pious and devoted parents. By baptism he was received into Christ's visible Church as an infant member, and in maturer years, by confirmation, into full communion of the German Reformed Church. At the age of nineteen, he served for about six months in a volunteer company, under Captain Ner Middlesworth, in the War of 1812, and was appointed quartermaster. But before his regiment could join the army under General Hull, the treasonable surrender of that general to the British commandant was made.

After the honorable discharge of his regiment, he returned home, and shortly afterwards entered upon a course of preparation for the gospel ministry. He prosecuted his studies, first under the tuition of the Rev. Isaac Gerhart, and subsequently

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<sup>1</sup> This sketch is taken from the Western Missionary, of April 9th, 1857, with some alterations and additions. — D. Y. H.



under Rev. Dr. Samuel Helffenstein, Sen., in Philadelphia.

At the meeting of the German Reformed Synod in New Holland, Lancaster County, Pa., he was commissioned to visit New Lancaster, and neighboring localities, in the State of Ohio, whence petitions had reached Synod, earnestly calling for ministers. He reached New Lancaster on the 20th of October, 1816, and spent about two months in missionary labors, visiting numerous localities in Fairfield, Perry, Pickaway, and Ross counties, preaching on the Sabbath, and often through the week; instructing and confirming fifty-nine persons, administering the Lord's Supper in two places to one hundred and thirty communicants. Being earnestly requested by the people, in various places, to become their pastor, he conditionally promised them his services. He then returned to the East again, resumed his studies under Dr. Helffenstein, in Philadelphia, and during the summer months preached in Berks County, Pa. At the meeting of Synod in York, Pa., in September, his call was confirmed, and he received license to become the pastor of that destitute field which the year previous he had visited and explored.

On the 11th of October ensuing, he arrived again in Lancaster, Ohio, and commenced his ministerial labors in the four counties he had previously visited; organizing congregations, preaching, baptizing, instructing the young in the catechism, and attending to other pastoral duties, which, in his extensive field, were both numerous and arduous, requiring

him to be "in journeyings often,"—"in perils of water,"—in perils of storm—in perils in the wilderness—"in weariness and painfulness" by constant exertion and frequent exposures. He was the only minister of our connection then in the vast field of central Ohio. The Rev. J. Peter Mahnenschmidt was stationed in Columbiana County, Ohio, and the Rev. Thomas Winters, Sen., though as yet not ordained, preached in Germantown, Montgomery County, Southwestern Ohio; Mr. B. Faust was in Canton, Stark County, preparing for the ministry, in order to supply the spiritual wants of that and neighboring places; and the Rev. H. Sonnendecker supplied Wooster and its vicinity, in Wayne County.

On the 19th of July, 1819, Mr. Weisz started again for Pennsylvania, and on August 24th he was married, by the Rev. Isaac Gerhart, to Miss Catharine Shurman, of Millerstown, on the Juniata River, Cumberland (now Perry) County, Pa. In September following, he attended the meeting of Synod in Old Lancaster, and was ordained to the gospel ministry, along with Mr. Thomas Winters. He returned, in company with his devoted wife, to his new field of labor in Ohio on the 25th of October; and from his memorandum-book it appears that they were fifteen days on their way from Millerstown, Pa., to Lancaster, Ohio, which indicates the inconvenience and fatigues which had to be experienced at that time on a trip of the kind.

The year following, *i. e.* on the 30th of April, 1820, the first Classis of the German Reformed Church, west of the Alleghany Mountains, was organized in

Lancaster, Ohio. Five ministers were present and four elders, representing forty-six organized congregations, with eight hundred and twenty-four communicant members, and reporting four hundred and thirty-four baptisms, two hundred and twenty-one confirmations, and twenty-six parochial schools. Two candidates for the ministry applied for license, and were referred to Synod. One minister and one elder were appointed as delegates to Synod, who, together with the candidates, crossed the mountains to attend its annual meeting in the East.

The rapid increase of the membership, and of the number of congregations, made it apparent that the harvest was truly great, but the laborers were few; and in the absence of a Theological School within the reach of such means as were at hand, it was found necessary to give private tuition to promising young men in a course of preparation for the ministry. And although Father Weisz, as well as others, had his hands full with pastoral labors in his extensive field, he managed to find time to instruct, at different times, several young men, and prepare them for the ministry. With some of them, when prepared, he divided his field; while others went forth to occupy new points in waste places. The same course was pursued by others of the few pioneers; and thus the borders of this western branch of our beloved Zion were enlarged, "her stakes were strengthened, and her cords were lengthened," so that at the fourth annual meeting of Classis, held in Lancaster in April, 1823, there were eleven ordained ministers belong-

ing to Classis, nine of whom were present, who, with the eldership, represented seventy-one congregations, and upwards of two thousand members.

The rapid increase of the western church made it necessary for the brethren to have the management of their ecclesiastical affairs more immediately in their own hands. This they felt to be imperatively demanded in order to the continued growth and prosperity of the Church in that widely extended territory, over which their jurisdiction extended. Accordingly, in June, 1824, the subject being well considered and discussed, they unanimously resolved themselves into a Synod, which was to be known under the appellation of "*The German Evangelical Reformed Synod of Ohio*," with the understanding of maintaining, "so far as their circumstances would admit," terms of correspondence with the Eastern Synod.

In the formation of this Synod, Father Weisz took a deep interest, as well as in every other enterprise of a public nature which looked to the prosperity of the Church at large. He ably and warmly advocated every good cause, and not without success. He was an able minister of Jesus Christ. In the language of another:

"Father Weisz was a 'workman who needed not to be ashamed.' His labors were multiplied and arduous. At first, he supplied thirteen congregations, which were scattered over four counties, at distances from each other varying from twenty to fifty-six miles. The whole Classis of Lancaster, excepting the Columbus and Delaware charges,

grew out of his extensive field of labor. Nor did he lay his armor by until the infirmities of a well-tried constitution compelled him to do so. He has done a great work for the Church here in the great West, and, although he is now dead, *'he yet speaketh.'*

"During his ministry of nearly forty years, he preached five thousand one hundred and forty-four sermons, baptized two thousand nine hundred and forty persons, confirmed one thousand four hundred and sixty-four, performed five hundred and thirty-six marriages, and attended seven hundred and thirty-six funerals.

"During the last three years previous to his demise, he was able to preach only occasionally; but when he did so, it was always with surprising perspicuity and power. His last sermon was preached on December the 19th, 1858, in the German Reformed church of this city — New Lancaster, Ohio, the scene of his long and eventful life and ministry — on Isa. lx. 1: *'Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.'*

"His absent sons were seasonably informed of his rapid decline, and were present, along with the rest of his children, to perform their last offices of filial affection during the last few days of his illness. He retained his consciousness to his last moments, spoke calmly but feebly, and gradually fell asleep at his residence in Lancaster, Ohio, March 10th, 1859, aged sixty-five years, eight months, and nineteen days.

"The funeral took place on Saturday, the 12th. It was largely attended. An English discourse was

preached, on 2d Tim. iv. 7, 8, by the pastor of the German Reformed church, and one in the German language, on Phil. i. 21, by the Rev. M. Wagenhals, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, of this place. Thus labored and fought this venerable pioneer, and having 'finished his course and kept the faith,' he departed, fully laden with the fruits of his ministration, to take possession of a crown of rejoicing among the redeemed in heaven."

## REV. JACOB GEIGER.

1793 — 1848.

THE ancestry of Rev. Jacob Geiger, as to their history in the New World, is traced back to his grandfather, Col. Jacob Geiger, who was a native of the western part of Germany, and came to this country, it is said, in the time of the war of the Revolution, under Lafayette. He had one son and three daughters. The son was Jacob Geiger, the father of the subject of our Memoir: he was born in Heidelberg Township, then Northampton, but now Lehigh County, Pa. Rev. Jacob Geiger was the fifth of six children—one brother, older than himself, and four sisters. Only two sisters are now living. His mother's maiden name was Eve Catharine Kern.

Rev. Jacob Geiger was born in Allentown, Lehigh County, Pa., October 17th, 1793. His father died while he was yet very young, when he was left in the care of his mother, who faithfully cared for her children. To satisfy the wishes of his mother, but much against his own will, he learned the tailoring business. The reason of this reluctance was that he had a strong desire to prepare himself for the holy ministry. The consequence was, that he could not content himself at his trade.

It was out of the way of what he deeply felt to be his mission, and he was uneasy and unhappy in its pursuit. He made known his views and feelings to his mother, and repeatedly asked her consent to devote himself to the ministry; but without success. So heavily, however, did he continue to feel the pressure of what he firmly believed to be a divine call upon his mind and heart, that he was willing to assume the responsibility of being a disciple of his Master in the way dictated by his own sense of duty. The struggle between a parent's wishes — perhaps too inconsiderately maintained<sup>1</sup> — and the call “follow me,” was now brought to an end; and he made arrangements with the Rev. Dr. J. C. Becker, of Northampton County, with whom he commenced his studies some time in the year 1814. After pursuing his studies here one year, he was transferred to Baltimore, where he continued his course over a year longer, under the direction of Rev. Dr. C. L. Becker.

At a meeting of Synod, held in York, Pa., in September, 1816, “Dr. Becker requested the Synod to appoint a committee to examine Mr. Jacob Geiger during the coming spring, in Lancaster, he having received a call from congregations in Manchester, Md., and vicinity. It was resolved that Revs. Geistweit, Hoffmeier, and Hendel be a com-

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<sup>1</sup> After he was settled at Manchester, his mother visited him; and when she heard him preach was deeply affected. She afterwards remarked, that she never believed that he would succeed. This was, no doubt, the secret of her opposition to his proposal to prepare himself for the ministry.



mittee for the purpose specified; and that they be authorized to license Mr. Geiger, in case they find him qualified.”<sup>1</sup> This committee accordingly examined him in the spring of 1817, and, finding him qualified, granted him a license, as instructed by Synod. His ordination took place at Lancaster, Pa., in 1819, and he is found exercising the full functions of the ministry immediately afterwards in the charge to which he was called.<sup>2</sup>

He accepted the call from the Manchester charge, and entered on his duties there on the 20th of April, 1817. His charge lay partly in Pennsylvania and partly in Maryland. It was composed of eight congregations, namely, Zion’s and Frieden’s churches, in Baltimore County, Md.; Jerusalem’s, St. Mary’s, Benjamin’s, and Basten’s churches, in Frederick County, Md.; David’s and Jacob’s churches, in York County, Pa. He found himself in the midst of a large and responsible field; but he entered upon its cultivation with much zeal and holy courage, and was from the beginning encouraged by marked success, the Lord establishing upon him the work of his hands. In his first statistical report to Synod, in September, 1817, we find that his charge numbered three hundred and thirty-five members, ninety-four of whom he had received by confirmation during that year, since June. In his annual statement for 1847 — which was his last — he reports two congregations less, and twelve hundred members. Such was the increase of his membership in thirty-one years of his ministry in this charge.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Synod, 1816, p. 72.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid., 1819, pp. 17, 22, 23.

From a diary, which he kept with evident care, it is seen that during the whole period of his ministry, all of which he spent in the same charge, he baptized three thousand seven hundred and fourteen, administered the solemn rite of confirmation to one thousand six hundred and sixty-eight, solemnized seven hundred and seventy-two marriages, and officiated at one thousand and thirty funerals.<sup>1</sup>

These statistics may serve to give some idea of his extensive labors and great success. They furnish, however, only the skeleton of his labors, which must be filled out by the numberless details which make up the daily cares, anxieties, toils, and self-denials of an earnest minister of the gospel. He was unwearied in his attentions to the young of his flock, and industrious in his endeavors to indoctrinate them, by means of catechetical instruction, and to move their hearts to a practical devotion of themselves to His service, with whom they had been incorporated by holy baptism. Quietly and steadily did his congregations grow in numbers, and his members in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He adhered strictly, in all his ministry, to the true order of the Church; and the consequence was that his charge prospered steadily, permanently, and in peace.

An incident that occurred at the very beginning of his ministry, which deeply and lastingly impressed him, and to which he always believed himself, under God, largely indebted for his success, is richly worthy of a record; and, if we could do it,

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<sup>1</sup> See Weekly Messenger, Nov. 8, 1848.

it should here be set down in letters of gold. When he had finished his studies, and was about to leave his revered teacher and take charge at Manchester, Dr. Becker called him back, and said to him :

“Mr. Geiger, do you know how to keep a congregation together in peace and prosperity?”

“I do not know that I do,” was his modest reply.

“I will tell you how,” responded the doctor. “If you should wish to call a flock of chickens together, would you seek to do it by throwing clubs and stones among them, accompanied with angry words, or would you throw grain and bread among them, with a soothing voice of invitation?”

“I would feed them with bread and grain, and call them kindly,” said Mr. Geiger, guessing his teacher’s meaning.

“That is right; and so, if you wish to keep a congregation together, do not cast in among them coarse, rough, and contentious words, for that will divide them, and cause them to fly for fear in all directions; but scatter among them the bread of life, the seed of truth, and they will gather around it to feed, and love to be near him who scatters it.”

Mr. Geiger never forgot these words of his teacher; and to the practice of this advice, it was no doubt greatly owing that he spent his whole life in peace and usefulness among the same people.

Let every young minister put this wisdom among his treasures. The doctor did not mean, of course, to say that he should not reprove the sins of the people directly and sharply, but he should not do

it in an angry and railing manner. We may use the same illustration a little farther, and say, that a flock of fowls does not care how much you hit their heads, only so it is with food, and not with clubs, that you hit them. They may bounce up, and run a little, but as soon as they see that it is food, they will run together around it in a moment, and feed upon it in peace. They will soon forget the pain in the joy that you feed them so richly. Experience proves that nothing unites a people more strongly and permanently among themselves and with their pastor, than that kind of preaching which lays open most keenly the sores of sin; only it must be done with the true sword of the Spirit, "which is the word of God," and not with clubs of railing, cast by the wrath of man.

[Mr. Geiger, so far as our somewhat indistinct recollection of his personal appearance serves us, was a man of large stature, constitutionally strong and robust, portly in his bearing, and formed, physically and mentally, for a life of industry, hard labor, and extraordinary exertion. In this respect he was eminently suited to the particular field of labor to which he was called. God wisely assigned to him a field of vast extent, subjecting its occupant to many hardships, and making large demands upon his ministerial zeal and activity. Any one, not blessed with so good a constitution and endowed with such wondrous elements of endurance, would have been utterly unable to traverse this vast territory, with bad roads and hardships innumerable, or to perform the enormous amount

of physical labor which his extensive field required. The Lord, who calls laborers into His vineyard, knows best where to place His faithful servants. If only we have minds to discern and hearts to love and follow the voice of the "Good Shepherd," we shall not go astray. He wisely appoints our fields of labor, and crowns our efforts with success. Such was the case with the faithful servant whose life and labors are here recorded.—D. Y. H.]

Rev. Mr. Geiger was married to Miss Catharine Seltzer, born in Europe, but residing in Baltimore from the fourth year of her age. The fruit of this union was three sons and four daughters. She died March 12th, 1835. He was afterwards married to Miss Esther Gobrecht, oldest daughter of Rev. John Gobrecht, of Lehigh County, Pa., August the 23d, 1836. By her he had three sons: she survives him, and resides in Manchester, Md.

Mr. Geiger was able to continue his labors till near the time of his death. He was confined to his bed only about two weeks. He died, with Christian resignation, in Manchester, in the midst of his family and his people, on Thursday night, October 19th, 1848, aged 55 years and 2 days. Thus he spent his whole ministerial life—a period of over thirty-one years—in the same charge.

On the Sabbath following, his mortal remains were deposited in the burial-place connected with the church in Manchester. Rev. Mr. Kempfer, Lutheran pastor in the same place, spoke appropriately at the house; after which an unusually large and solemn funeral procession moved from the par-

sonage to the spacious church, where the remains of the deceased were placed before the altar. The church, outside and within, had been appropriately hung with the drapery of mourning, which accorded well with the occasion of a beloved pastor's death, and called forth new emotions of sorrow from the hearts of the assembled multitude, as they followed into the church the remains of him whom they had so often followed while living. The services were commenced by the Rev. Samuel Gutelius, then of Abbottstown, an old friend and fellow-laborer, who preached solemnly and impressively from the words; "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation," (Heb. xiii. 7.) He was followed by the Rev. John G. Wolff, at that time pastor at Taneytown, in an appropriate English sermon on the words: "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Pet. iv. 18;) after which the corpse was borne to the grave, and, by the solemn office of the Liturgy, consigned to its rest till the resurrection in the last day. The choir sang a suitable hymn while the grave was filling up.

The day of his funeral manifested very strikingly how sincerely this man of God was beloved by his people, and by the community in general. It is said that from two to three thousand persons attended his burial. The rosy faces of the young, and the furrowed cheeks of the aged, alike bore the marks of sorrow and tears.

## REV. JACOB SCHOLL.

1797 — 1847.

JACOB SCHOLL was born in Bucks County, Pa., on the 16th of November, 1797. He felt himself called to the holy ministry in early life; and in due time he obeyed this call.<sup>1</sup> On the 1st day of July, 1816, he was received into the German Reformed Church, by the rite of confirmation, by the Rev. Samuel Helffenstein; with whom he also afterwards studied theology in Philadelphia. On the 10th of September, 1818, he was licensed to preach the gospel by the Synod of North America. He was soon after ordained. During the year 1819 he performed a missionary tour through the States of Virginia and North Carolina, preaching the gospel to the scattered members of the German Reformed Church in those regions. His journal of this tour is still extant, and is very interesting.

In the month of September, 1819, he received a call from the several congregations composing the Sherman's Valley charge, in Perry County, Pa. This call he accepted, and entered upon the discharge of his pastoral duties in that field in the following month. On the 3d of October he preached

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<sup>1</sup> This sketch, with some changes, was prepared by the Rev. M. A. Smith.

his introductory sermon in the St. Peter's church, near Landisburg. Some time after this he was joined in marriage to Miss Catharine Keller, daughter of the late Mr. Leonard Keller, of Carlisle. She was a sister of George Keller, Esq., now deceased.

The Sherman's Valley charge was a very laborious one, consisting, at least subsequently, of nine or ten congregations. Some of these were organized by Mr. Scholl. It is said that the Buffalo, Bealor's, Newport, Fio Forge, and Ludolph's congregations were all organized by him, and perhaps some others. The principal congregations were the Stone church, at the upper end of the county, Loysville, St. Peter's, and Bloomfield. In some of these congregations he preached once every four weeks, and in some only every eight weeks. To reach some of them he had to travel a distance of from fifteen to eighteen miles, over roads which in those days, and at some seasons of the year, were almost impassable. He preached exclusively in the German language.

Although Mr. Scholl cannot be regarded as the pioneer of the German Reformed Church in Sherman's Valley, yet he may be regarded as the first *settled* German Reformed minister in that region. Previous to his time what few congregations existed had been almost exclusively supplied by ministers from abroad. Indeed, when he entered the field, it was in all respects missionary ground.

About the year 1838 the field had become so extended, and the congregations so increased under the labors of Mr. Scholl, that it became necessary to divide the charge. Two new charges were ac-



cordingly formed out of the old charge — the Landisburg and the Bloomfield charge. Mr. Scholl continued as pastor of the Landisburg charge until the year 1840, when he resigned; and during the following year became pastor of the Bloomfield charge. Here he labored till the close of his life, in 1847.

From the time of his marriage until the spring of 1841, Mr. Scholl lived at the parsonage belonging to the charge. This was situated about three miles east of Landisburg, on the road leading from Landisburg to Harrisburg. There was a glebe of about fifteen acres attached to it. After the division of the charge, this was sold. This is an interesting spot even now. The external appearance of things is but little changed. The weather-boarded but unpainted house looks very much as it did twenty years ago, when occupied by Mr. Scholl, only that it is a little more weather-beaten. But we see not now — as we did then — the pastor and his happy family; these either rest beneath the clods of the valley, or are scattered over our widely extended country. Strangers occupy their place!

In his own family, and in his private intercourse with his people, Mr. Scholl was frank and open-hearted. His manners were courteous. Everybody seemed to like him. He was of commanding personage — a little above the medium height — rather spare than otherwise. He walked and stood perfectly erect. His eye was dark and piercing. In the pulpit he appeared to much advantage. He had the power of gaining and holding the attention

of an audience, as perhaps the fewest number of public speakers have. "I have heard him speak after others had spoken," says the Rev. M. A. Smith, by whom this sketch has been mainly furnished, "and as soon as he arose there was a breathless silence in the house." He was a popular preacher; his manner was clear and forcible. He was not a profound man; his mind was of the ordinary cast; nor had he enjoyed superior opportunities for acquiring an education. But his mind was clear, and what he did know, he could use to the best advantage. He preached to the heart; there was always an earnestness in his preaching which could not fail to strike the hearer and produce conviction. In a word, his preaching was practical and biblical. A favorite class of texts with him were the parables of our Lord.

Mr. Scholl was exceedingly exact in everything; very neat in his apparel—a model, indeed, for his profession in this respect. Order reigned in everything over which he had any control. He was also very punctual. The appointed hour always found him at his post.

The labors of Mr. Scholl were successful perhaps in a more than ordinary degree. God gave him not a few seals to his ministry. Although he fully appreciated and valued in the highest degree the ordinary means of grace, and attached to them the first importance, yet he frequently also held protracted meetings, or, as they were then called, "three days' meetings," especially in connection with communion seasons. These were the more important, as

preaching was so seldom enjoyed on the Sabbath. He was, however, opposed to all fanaticism and disorder, and could not tolerate them. He was also a friend to prayer-meetings. He frequently attended these during the week in private houses and in school-houses. Much good was certainly accomplished in this way. Some who were awakened and brought to Christ under his labors continue to this day, though many have fallen asleep, and they still cherish his memory with the warmest affection, and speak of him as the instrument whom God employed for the salvation of their souls.

Mr. Scholl was not without faults, but these we believe have been washed away in the blood of the Lamb, and it becomes us to cover them with the mantle of charity.

His health was for many years very precarious. Often he was scarcely able to preach; but when it was at all possible, he regularly filled his appointments. For some months previous to his death, his sufferings were indeed great. After a severe and protracted illness, which God enabled him to bear with Christian patience and resignation, he closed his mortal career on the 4th of September, 1847. His remains were buried in the graveyard attached to St. Peter's church, by the side of his first wife. Here they will repose till the resurrection morn, when the great trump shall sound and the dead awake. The funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. C. H. Leinbach, his successor in the Landisburg charge, from Heb. xiii. 7: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken

unto you the word of God : whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”

Mr. Scholl was twice married. His second wife was Miss Catharine Schæffer. Of the first wife, three children survive him—George Keller, Charles, and Martha. Of the second wife, there are also three living. His widow is still living, and resides near Landisburg.

The salary of Mr. Scholl was at all times slender, barely affording him and his family a living. Hence, at his death, he could leave but little to his widow and children. May they all secure that better treasure in heaven “ which fadeth not away.”

## REV. HENRY KOCH.

1795 — 1845.

THE Rev. H. Koch was born of Christian parents, members of the German Reformed Church, in Northampton County, Pa., in the year of our Lord 1795. His parents were George Koch and Elizabeth, a daughter of the Rev. Gideon Hicker, a deceased minister of the German Reformed Church. He was early animated with a desire to be a minister of the gospel. His pious parents endeavored to encourage him in his youthful impressions by conversation and example. At the age of sixteen, he attended the catechetical lectures of his pastor, the Rev. Thomas Pomp, and was received into the Church of his fathers, and of his own choice, by the side of a number of others, his companions in early life. In one of his sermons, no doubt the first he preached as pastor on a confirmation occasion, he says, "That day and the feelings of my heart are now vividly before me,—the solemn occasion when I, but a few years since, bowed my trembling knees before the altar, giving myself unreservedly to my Lord and Master Jesus Christ. Oh, how awfully solemn was that moment, confessing in weakness with my mouth what my heart believed! May the good spirit of our Lord impress you with

similar feelings, so that you may confess with your mouth what your hearts really believe."

Shortly after his confirmation, he was placed under the care of the Rev. Dr. Becker, of Baltimore, to prepare for the ministry. He devoted four years in studying, which was all a private course included in those days. He passed a satisfactory examination, and was inducted into the office of the holy ministry, A. D. 1819.<sup>1</sup> Shortly after this, he, in company with his friend, the Rev. N. P. Hacke, proceeded on a missionary tour to the western part of his native State. The Rev. N. P. Hacke remained in Greensburg, Westmoreland County, and the Rev. H. Koch came to that portion which is now Clarion County. Here he pitched his tent, and commenced his labors of love among a few Germans, emigrants from Switzerland and the eastern part of the State. The country was thinly inhabited; no roads, only footpaths and marked trees to serve as guides from "clearing to clearing" and from one log-cabin to another. His first sermons were preached in cabins in the winter, and in the woods during summer. An old Father remarked: "Es war uns nicht zu weit zwölf Meilen zur Predigt zu gehen, mit Gewehr in der Hand, denn es war damals gefährlich," — "We did not deem it too far to go twelve miles to divine service with guns in our hands, for it was then a dangerous time."

But few have had to endure the hardships which he endured. He labored in a country without

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<sup>1</sup> Syn. Min., pp. 15, 22.

roads, abounding in streams, very numerous, rapid, and deep, without bridges. Frequently would his members go with him to the Alleghany and Clarion rivers, to see him crossing them, when bank full; and with trembling hearts they often beheld his horse plunging into the awful, angry, swollen stream. On one occasion, remaining absent from his family beyond the promised time, on account of continued falling of snow and rain, he leaped from ice-cake to ice-cake across the Alleghany, and found his little family, then living in the woods, a distance of two miles from any neighbor, in a suffering state. On one occasion, the Rev. N. P. Hacke, with his wife, a sister to Mrs. Koch, visited him. They started from home in a vehicle, but were compelled to cut their way with an axe for miles, to get to his house.

Some inference may be drawn from this as to what field of labor was appointed to this servant of the Lord, and what hardships and privations he had to endure in the service of the Church.

The congregations he organized are, St. Paul's, in Beaver Township; St. John's, in Churchville; Trinity, at Redbank; St. Peter's, at Petersburg; and one at Sugar Creek, Armstrong County. These organizations were all effected between 1820 and 1828. Besides serving these congregations with stated preaching, he was missionating at different points; some of which, since his death, have fallen into the hands of the Presbyterian and Associate Reformed Churches.

He labored in this region for a number of years

as the only German minister, thus in a measure supplying the membership of the Lutheran Church, who were occasionally visited by a minister from Greensburg. About the year 1833, at the time when the so-called New Measures were introduced into some of the Reformation churches, he was debarred from preaching in the St. John's church, which was then about being rebuilt. When the arrangements for building the new church were made,—a union church,—a few leading and designing men in the congregation, in connection with the Lutherans, formed a constitution, prohibiting “any one to be stated pastor in this house who is unable to preach in the German and English.” When the constitution was read at the laying of the corner-stone, the old servant, who stood by his flock so long, and endured so many hardships in the service there, had to leave with tears in his eyes, saying: “This is the dishonesty of the Mourner's Bench system.” Thus this congregation was deprived for seven years of the means of grace; they had either to join the New-Measure Lutherans, or go somewhere else, for the congregation could not, independently of the rest, sustain a German Reformed minister.

He continued his labors faithfully in the remaining congregations, until a way opened to obtain from the Seminary a young man who could preach both in the English and German languages. They at length secured the services of Rev. H. Hoffman. Shortly before this brother reached the field, Rev. Koch laid down his armor, to obtain the crown



of life. Before he departed this life, he called his family and some members of his church to his bedside, and said: "Be true to your God, to your Church, of which I was a minister, and the time is at hand when she will arise and shine, and become strong and influential." After this short admonition, he closed his eyes in death, on the 7th of August, 1845. His mortal remains are interred in the German Reformed cemetery at Rimersburg.

Thus ended the life and labors of one of the first German Reformed ministers of Western Pennsylvania. Though he is dead, he yet lives and speaks in the blessed results of his self-sacrificing ministry. Even now is the seed which he sowed in tears still yielding its priceless sheaves in that portion of the Church. The field cultivated by the deceased has, since his death, grown into five charges, and forms, at present, with a few exceptions, the Classis of Clarion. Faith, patience, hope, ye weary ones that sow, for the reaping-time will come, when a rich and glorious harvest will reward your labors and tears.

Ye who think the truth ye sow  
Lost beneath the winter snow,  
Doubt not time's unerring law  
Yet shall bring the genial thaw.  
God in nature ye can trust,—  
Is the God of grace less just?

Workers on the barren soil,  
Yours may seem a thankless toil;  
Sick at heart with hope deferred,  
Listen to the cheering word:  
Now the faithful sower grieves,  
Soon he'll bind his golden sheaves!

## REV. BENJAMIN FAUST.

1797 — 1832.

MR. FAUST was the first regular German Reformed minister who labored in and around Canton, Stark County, Ohio.<sup>1</sup>

He was born on the 19th of November, 1797, either in Washington or in Westmoreland County, Pa. His youth was spent in Trumbull County, Ohio, where the first elements of an English education were obtained, and his first steps taken towards qualifying himself for the office and work of the holy ministry. After having fully determined to devote himself to this sacred work, he studied theology under the direction of the Rev. J. P. Mahnenschmidt, who was the first German Reformed minister in Eastern Ohio.

At what time, precisely, Mr. Faust entered the ministry, we have not been able to ascertain. It must, however, have been some time during the years 1819 or 1820.<sup>2</sup> At that time he was ordained, and took charge of some eight or ten congregations in Stark County, Ohio; some of which had been organized by the Rev. Father Mahnenschmidt,

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Rev. J. W. Hamm. Sketch entirely re-written, and additions made, by the Editor.

<sup>2</sup> Syn. Min., 1819, pp. 5, 17; and 1820, p. 7.

while others were organized by Mr. Faust himself. He labored with great zeal in this charge for the space of twelve or thirteen years. He was a good man, earnest, zealous, and faithful to his trust, and beloved by all who knew him. He stood high both as a Christian and as a minister of the gospel.

Comparatively young, and in the midst of great usefulness, Mr. Faust was cut down and removed by the hand of death, and his people left shepherdless. He died in peace on the 10th of November, 1832, aged 35 years less 9 days, after he had served in the office of the holy ministry about thirteen years.

Soon after his ordination he was married to Miss Rank, from the vicinity of Canton, Stark County, Ohio. His widow and four children survived him, and are still living in that section of country — the widow and her fatherless children occupying the house of her departed husband.

Three of the congregations which formed part of Mr. Faust's charge were afterwards served by the Rev. John W. Hamm, namely, Uniontown, Manchester, and St. James, in Summit County, Ohio. The other congregations comprised in Mr. Faust's charge were Canton, Osnaburg, Paris, Martin's, Sherman's, Zion, and Bethlehem. Over this vast field he travelled and labored in his Master's cause with marked fidelity, zeal, and perseverance during the whole period of his public life. His efforts were not in vain. In these flourishing churches, which he aided in founding and building up, are still seen, and will continue to be seen, the fruits of his earnest ministry — his labors and his

cares. He now rests in peace. His reward is in heaven.

In the Minutes of Synod of 1833, affectionate notice is taken of the death of Mr. Faust. The record says: "Synod also called to mind the blessed death of the Rev. Benjamin Faust, of Canton, Ohio, a warm friend and worthy member of our Synod, who no more needs our praise for his faithfulness and toils, having been translated beyond the scenes of earth, to receive, in a better life, the reward of his labors here. He has shown us an example of piety which is worthy of our imitation, and which leaves us the sweet assurance that we shall only for a brief period be separated from him."

"Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love:  
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.  
When we asunder part, it gives us inward pain;  
But we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again."

## REV. WILLIAM REITER.

1799 — 1826.

"While man is growing, life is in decrease;  
 And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb:  
 Our birth is nothing but our death begun.  
 Shall we then fear lest that should come to pass  
 Which comes to pass each moment of our lives?  
 . . . . .

Religion! Providence! an after state!  
 Here is firm footing; here is solid rock!  
 This can support us; all is sea besides,  
 Sinks under us; bestorms, and then devours.  
 His hand the good man fastens on the skies,  
 And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl."

WILLIAM REITER, the first regular pastor of the Shanesville, Ohio, charge, was born in Lancaster County, Pa., on the 30th of September, A. D. 1799.<sup>1</sup> His parents were members of the German Reformed Church, and evinced a good degree of interest in the general prosperity of Zion. They were doubtless descendants of Palatinate emigrants, who were generally of the Reformed faith, and both exemplary and devoted in the service of their divine Master.

When he was about six weeks old, his parents moved to Westmoreland County, Pa. Here, in his

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<sup>1</sup> This sketch, slightly changed, was prepared by the Rev. J. H. Reiter, of Miamisburg, Ohio, and published in the West. Missionary.

tenth year, he commenced his primary studies in an English school, making commendable progress, considering the advantages enjoyed. A few years passed by, and another change of residence was contemplated. Hence, about the year 1814 or 1815, his parents removed to Stark County, Ohio, and settled on land that was still in a state of nature. The whole country was as yet comparatively a wilderness. Here, in connection with his parents, he endured the toils, privations, and hardships of "backwoods' life;" and, as a dutiful son, he aided them with his own hands in clearing lands and in promoting their temporal interests and general welfare, until he felt it his duty to dedicate himself to God in the gospel ministry.

It appears, from some fragmentary records of his own, that he became seriously impressed in early youth with the subject of his salvation, as well as with his call to the ministry. He experienced variations of feeling,—of light and gloom, of hope and fear. When he would do good, evil was present with him. There was a conflict between the flesh and the spirit. And afterwards, in reviewing his personal history, he regarded his life from youth up, as one of pain and toil, condemning himself for having wasted too much time in worldly amusement and vanity; yet, in full accordance with the honest experience of men generally, declaring that, instead of realizing substantial pleasure in them, he experienced internal disquietude and guilt. While this internal conflict was going on, his parents—without any knowledge of the fact—were keeping

a vigilant eye on him, and endeavored to train him up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Means of grace and churchly influence, though very circumscribed, were made available. Already in his fifteenth year, under parental direction, he attended catechetical instruction under the devoted Rev. J. P. Mahnenschmidt. This seems to have exerted a happy influence on his mind and heart. He found pleasure in attending these instructions, and cherished a longing desire to become savingly acquainted with Christ. New light sprang up in his soul, and he firmly resolved to lead the life of a consistent Christian. Subsequently, he was tempted to pursue the pleasures of the world for a while, but not without much internal disquietude. Conscience, that heavenly monitor, giving him no peace in the path of disobedience, he retraced the steps of his prodigal wanderings, and was brought to consider seriously the importance of pursuing the course of duty prescribed in the gospel. He paused — he pondered — he prayed! He acknowledged the supremacy of the Spirit, and he cherished a hope in the mercy of God. Now he was forcibly reminded, by a voice within, of the early indications of his call to the gospel ministry. In his seventeenth year, this became stronger, and, in yielding to the claims of his divine Master, he supplicated the Lord to sustain him by the power of His grace, and to qualify him for the duties of this responsible office.

At this time, however, he could not see his way clear to take the preparatory step. Filial love

seems to have been one of the restraining causes which prevented him from going forward and carrying into effect his resolves. The embarrassing circumstances of his parents in their "wilderness home" induced him to render all possible aid in the support of a large family. This bespeaks a noble and generous spirit, and is commendable in the conduct of a son.

The secret struggles and longings of his heart had thus far remained unrevealed. But, in his twentieth year, he made known for the first time his desire of becoming a minister of the gospel, to his sisters, who, acting the part of mediators, informed his parents of the fact. The result was favorable. The consent of the parents was obtained. New hopes were awakened, and the internal conflicts and gloom were once more changed to peace and consolation. The present became joyous, and the future began to brighten.

Having obtained a theological work from Rev. B. Faust, he devoted the leisure he could find from labor on the farm to study. Some months were thus passed with pleasure and satisfaction. On the 7th of December, 1820, he left his paternal home to avail himself of the counsel and instruction of Rev. J. Stough, a Lutheran minister at New Lisbon, Ohio, with whom he commenced his studies on the 8th of the same month. He applied himself assiduously, and made commendable progress. In consequence of the scarcity of ministers, he was required soon after to preach occasionally. He preached his first sermon on the 21st of January, 1821.



Calls for preaching came from abroad. In saddening accents, the Macedonian cry was heard to rise among the destitute, pleading earnestly for the bread of life and the light of salvation. About this time he received a pressing invitation from some members of the German Reformed Church in Tuscarawas County to visit them and preach unto them the unsearchable riches of Christ. He was moved with compassion, and went to them with a message of love and peace. On the 3d of June, 1821, he preached to them, for the first time, in the Seltenrich's church, which was in a very dilapidated condition. Here a nucleus was formed, out of which grew the congregations of Shanesville, Ragersville, and Bedford. His discourse on this occasion was based on Psalm viii. 5. During this missionary tour he also preached at Stone Creek and New Philadelphia. And it appears that during the same year, he made his residence at Shanesville, where he preached for the first time on the 23d of September, 1821, from Jeremiah vi. 16. Henceforth he preached here regularly, excepting three months in the winter of 1821-2, and two months in the following winter, during which time he prosecuted his theological studies with Rev. H. Sonendecker, at Wooster, Ohio.

On the 15th of April, 1823, he was examined and ordained at New Philadelphia, Ohio, by a committee appointed by the Synod of North America, consisting of Rev. J. P. Mahnenschmidt, Rev. H. Sonendecker, and Rev. D. Rahauser. He now entered fully upon the responsible duties of the min-

istry, and labored zealously in the vineyard of the Lord. His field of labor was very extensive, consisting of eight congregations, which were located in three different counties, namely, New Philadelphia, Stone Creek, Shanesville, Seltenrich's, Mill Creek, Berlin, Schneider's, and Boas'. He continued his labors of love in this charge, with much acceptance and fidelity, up to August 8th, 1825. Here, just as the prospects of his ministerial usefulness and success were brightening, his labors were arrested by disease, which soon gave evidence that his end was slowly but surely approaching. His sickness, being of a lingering character, continued for nine months, during which time he experienced much suffering. While the body was racked with pain, he had also to endure the assaults of the evil one under the form of temptation and doubt. The conflict was severe and trying. However, after being tried as in the refiner's fire, he finally triumphed through faith in Jesus Christ, bearing his affliction with meekness, patience, and resignation; for he felt assured that these light afflictions would work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory! The endearing scenes of this life lost their charms. Christ became supremely precious to his soul, and on Him rested his hope of eternal deliverance. Feeling that here was not his abiding home, he believingly longed for a purer and holier state beyond this vale of tears! At times he seemed to realize a sweet foretaste of the joys of that better land "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest."

The appointed time for his release arrived, and his days ended in peace in May, 1826, being only in the twenty-seventh year of his age. He died with these words upon his lips: "*Now I am going home! Lord Jesus, help me!*"

He was buried at Shanesville on the 10th of May, 1826. Rev. H. Sonendecker preached the funeral sermon in the German, and Rev. Schneider, a Lutheran minister, in the English language, from this text, which had been selected by himself: "*I believe, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted.*" Psalm cxvi. 10. He had also requested that, at his funeral, they should sing the hymn:

"Ach wie herrlich ist das Leben,  
Welches Gott nach dieser Zeit,  
Seinem Volk verspricht zu geben  
In der süßen Ewigkeit."

He left behind him a wife and child, as well as a large circle of friends, to mourn his early departure.

During the period of his ministry, he preached 424 sermons, all of which are noted in his diary, either in the form of skeletons or brief sketches. There also remain, of his composition, three hymns, which breathe a pure Christian and devotional spirit, but are somewhat deficient in style. Among his books, now in possession of his widow, at Benton, Holmes County, Ohio, are also found several works in manuscript, which he transcribed during some leisure hours. There are two works on Dogmatics, a German Grammar, a History of the Old and New Testament, together with some main facts from profane history.

He did not enjoy the advantages of a liberal education; but being endowed by nature with a well-balanced mind, he was enabled to turn his limited acquirements to good practical account. And what he lacked in scientific and theological attainments, he in some measure made up by assiduously applying himself to the study of the Bible. This to him was the great storehouse of truth, the fountain of light, and the source of all true consolation. It became his counsellor, his instructor, his guide, and his companion. He imbibed its spirit, and lived in the element of its power. Hence, his preaching, though not profound nor polished, was strictly biblical, full of simplicity and unction, and thus became convincing, instructive, and consoling. His piety, zeal, and fidelity, as a minister of Christ, were equally commendable. He was sound in faith and fervent in spirit, and was devoted to the best interests of the Church. Though cut off as a brighter future was opening before him, his ministerial labors were already attended with success; and in his death the Church sustained a severe loss; but her loss was his gain. His course is finished, and he kept the faith. His trials are passed, his sufferings have ceased, and his pilgrimage on earth has ended in everlasting rest. Peace be to his ashes! His emancipated spirit is basking in the pure sunlight of immortality, sharing in the unspeakable felicity of the ransomed of the Lord, and shouting with an angelic voice the praises of God and the Lamb! "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

## REV. DANIEL YOUNG.

1795 — 1831.

THOUGH the subject of this sketch was born and baptized in the German Reformed Church, yet, providentially, but a few years of his short earthly life were spent in her bosom and service. Having, however, occupied the prominent and influential positions of editor of the German Reformed Magazine and professor in her infant Seminary, and having stood thus associated with the leading men of the Church in his day, a sketch of his life falls in with the design of our work.

Mr. Young was born near Goshen, Orange County, in the State of New York. His father was a native of the principality of Nassau, in Western Germany, and emigrated to this country, with his father's family, at the age of ten years, in 1753. Daniel was the youngest but one of twelve children. By industry and economy his father was successful in securing for himself and family in due time a piece of land, which he cleared, and changed from a wild forest into a fruitful farm. Amid the simplicity of farm-life, and in the midst of rural scenes, the subject of our sketch received his earliest impressions, and passed the interesting stages of childhood and youth. The rudiments of knowledge

were received at a country school, and were such as these humble nurseries at that period furnished, —reading, writing, and arithmetic. No remarkable developments of talent were observed in his boy-life; but he learned readily and cheerfully. He was a lad of quiet disposition, and of very delicate susceptibilities. Religious impressions were early made upon his mind and heart through the family and the Church; and, at the proper age, he cheerfully and gratefully dedicated himself to God in a public profession of his faith. Though the neighborhood had been originally German Reformed, with a church about six or seven miles distant, yet, at this time, it had become entirely Presbyterian, and his parents, from the force of circumstances, had transferred their membership to that Church. Thus Mr. Young also naturally became a member of that communion.

As a young man, Mr. Young felt his heart inclined towards the office of the holy ministry. At the age of twenty-one, he commenced his preparatory classical studies; and graduated in Union College in the year 1819. After this he entered the theological seminary at Princeton. Considerations of health, however, obliged him to quit his studies there before the full course was completed. He was then licensed to preach, and, at the close of the year 1822, employed as a missionary in the destitute region about Tappahannock, in Virginia. In the following summer, he returned to his native place, and was ordained as an evangelist by the Presbytery of Hudson, Nov. 13th, 1823. The winter following he

spent in the domestic missionary service, travelling and preaching as he was able. In the fall of 1824, he took charge of a classical school in Alexandria, where he continued only until the following spring.

His health still continued feeble, some friends offered him an opportunity of visiting Europe, in the hope of regaining or re-establishing the same, which invitation he accepted. In April, 1825, he sailed for Portugal; where he spent the summer. In November of that year, we find him again at home at the house of his mother in Orange County, New York. The following winter he preached in Wilmington, North Carolina.

In 1827 he was sent as a delegate from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to attend the meeting of the German Reformed Synod at York, Pa. Having in this way been introduced to some of the influential ministers of Synod, it resulted in his being invited to Carlisle to assume the editorship of the Magazine of the German Reformed Church, then in its infancy, and published in that place. The Church had ever been to him an object of silent love, as having been the Church of his fathers; and he was happy thus to find an opening which promised him an opportunity of usefulness in her service. He accordingly accepted the call, and removed to Carlisle.

A year was now spent at Carlisle in the labors of the editorial chair or calling, in which he manifested much zeal and ability. In September, 1829, during the Synod of Lebanon, he was received as a member of that body, and at the same time

elected as assistant professor in the Theological Seminary of the Church, which was about being removed to York, Pa. Here he entered upon his labors with hope and courage, finding true pleasure in his work; but not one year was completed before his sinking health forbade his continuance of his lectures, or instructions in any form. He went to Philadelphia, to consult the physicians in the medical college, who insisted on his leaving immediately for the South. Dr. Chapman said to him: "You cannot live another winter here. Go to the South: it will save your life." Florida was named at first; but, at the earnest solicitation of his wife, who had a brother in Augusta, Georgia, that was agreed upon as the place of his winter abode. He left for the South in autumn of 1830, a pilgrim in pursuit of health, but at the same time really a pilgrim seeking his tomb in a strange land. No improvement in his health having taken place, but rather a still more decided decline, his devoted wife had made arrangements to hasten to his side; but when she was about to leave in a vessel for Savannah, that terrible winter froze the harbor and bay, so that no vessel could leave Philadelphia for sea for a period of two months. It was then too late; and she saw him no more. He died, from hemorrhage of the lungs, at twelve o'clock on Sunday night, March 6th, 1831, in the 36th year of his age. He was surrounded in his last hours by all the comforts that a circle of Christian friends—to whom his brief sojourn had endeared him—could afford, and with all the peace and hope which flow from that



blessed religion which he professed and richly enjoyed.

Mr. Young was one of the excellent of the earth. Dr. Robert Baird, a classmate of his in the Seminary, who was with him when he died, in communicating to Dr. Mayer the sad intelligence of his death, says: "It would be useless for me to add anything on the subject of the character of our brother,—his humble, unassuming piety; his unblamable life; his great attainments in biblical learning; or on the loss which your Institution and Church, and the friends of literature, have sustained." Dr. Mayer, his colleague in the Seminary, also speaks of him in the highest terms.

Mr. Young was mild and modest in his manners, studious in his habits, and zealous for the promotion of true piety. Few men suffer from excessive sensibility as he did; and very few find their hopes disappointed and plans overthrown as were his. Yet in all his changes, he saw only a necessary tribulation, by which every vicissitude in a life of faith is an advance upward. His meek and submissive life truly breathed the prayer of the sacred poet:

Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!  
E'en though it be a cross  
That raiseth me;  
Still all my song shall be,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee.

For some years the desire to engage as a missionary to Arabia had controlled his studies and plans.

The study of the Arabic and Syriac languages he prosecuted with gratifying success, for the sake of such a work in the East. An article in the Princeton Biblical Repertory in 1829, on The Sacred Poetry of the Early Christians, shows somewhat of his reading in Syriac. He contributed also other articles to that Review; and his consent to be a candidate for the editorship of that publication was solicited in 1829, while on his way to the post to which he had been elected in York, Pa. Having now, however, given himself to the service of the German Reformed Church, he declined very decidedly. Biblical criticism was his favorite study, and in this department he made good progress. He is said to have been a most promising Hebrew scholar, and understood the German language well.

Mr. Young was married in November, 1829, to Mrs. S. A. Pierson, daughter of Loammi Moore, of Morristown, New Jersey, a very intelligent and truly Christian lady, who is still living and silently cherishing his memory. She resides in Reading, Pa., and conducts in that place a female seminary, which sustains a very high reputation. She is still a worthy member of the German Reformed Church.

Mr. Young's life was not long, but he lived well. The older ministers and members of the Church still cherish a pleasant and grateful remembrance of his beautiful life and important services. An early death was to him an early birth into that blessed world of true life where they "die no more."

REV. DAVID SHEARER.<sup>1</sup>

1782 — 1857.

DAVID SHEARER died in Huntington, Ia., September 10th, 1857. He was born in Guilford County, N. C., October 30th, 1782. His parents, who dedicated him to God in holy baptism, gave him a Christian education, thus laying in his youth the foundation of piety, faith, and a desire to serve the Lord. The blessings of Christian nurture, and the salutary influences of confirmation, soon became apparent; for even in his youthful days he made preparations for pursuing a course of instruction in the science of theology. He studied a whole year while he yet remained under the parental roof. But inasmuch as his parents were in moderate circumstances, and his father greatly needed his help, the desire and pleasure of continuing his theological course were for some time interrupted.

In 1803 he was united in the bonds of holy wedlock to Mary La Rose, whose father was one of the first German Reformed ministers in Ohio.

In 1804 he emigrated to Ohio, where he sup-

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<sup>1</sup> This sketch is taken from the Western Missionary, of December 2d, 1857, where it appears as a translation from the Evangelist. It was prepared in German by "J. J. B," and translated by "Rev. G. Z. M."

ported his family by day-labor; and not until the year 1818 did it please the Lord, who overrules all things, to open the way for him to recommence the study of theology, and thus satisfy his holy desire. His father-in-law, under whose direction he studied for the space of two years, proffered him his assistance. He entered a theological institution at Lancaster, Ohio, and under the direction of Prof. Schuler, Rev. Leist, and finally Father Thos. Winters, he completed his theological course.

In the year 1823 he received and accepted a call from several congregations in Highland County, Ohio, which he served until the beginning of 1827, at which time he received and accepted a call from the Shanesville charge. With the blessing of God, he labored in this latter charge for thirteen years. Here he endured all the hardships and bore all the heavy burdens of a Western pioneer, which necessarily required strong faith and much self-denial. With what degree of success he labored there, we learn from a written document received from the consistory of that charge. Among other things, it says that when the Rev. D. Shearer had occasion to resign his charge to the Rev. J. G. Zahner, and took his departure, the sympathies and feelings of many of his old members could be visibly seen and read upon their countenances, as they called to mind the happy events of the past, in which many a lovely feature was to be seen, and many an awakening sermon had been heard. But in that same document came to view, in the most touching manner, some of the hardships which he, with lamb-like

patience, endured, simply for the purpose of winning souls for Christ. He shared liberally in the wants and distresses of the new settlers in his charge, and brought help and consolation into the tents of the poor.

His memory is imperishably treasured up in our hearts, for the vast amount of good which he has done us; but alas, that we have not repaid him. Our hearts unite in the language of his funeral text, Numb. xxiii. 10. "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

Under the arduous labor of his responsible calling, his health finally declined. This, in connection with the cares of his large family, and especially the education of his children, made it necessary for him to withdraw from the ministry. He emigrated in the year 1840 to Huntington County, Ia., to pass the remainder of his days in peace and quietness on his farm. In the year 1850 he removed into the town of Huntington, where his wife died six years previous to his own death. He had eight children—five sons and three daughters; three sons preceded their mother to the shores of immortality. The Lord, whose ways are not our ways, was pleased to prove His servant in the school of suffering. About four years before his death he was afflicted with white-swelling, which was afterwards healed; but, in consequence of a severe cold, the disease broke out anew, and became more violent than ever. It now affected the bone, the most painful part of which was in the knee. Although he was unable to attend religious meetings, he took a deep interest

in building up the youthful congregation in the place where he resided. His patience, his faith, and his experience which he related, were, to those who visited him during his sickness, a great blessing.

Three hours before his death he quoted a passage from the Psalms, and gave the views which he had carried out in a sermon. He wrestled in faith, through sighs and prayers with God, with a knowledge and sense of sin, before his end. On being asked: "If he was weak in the faith," he replied, "No; I can believe." He prayed with the minister present with a fervent heart, an hour before he fell asleep. His age was seventy-four years, ten months, and ten days. Sunday after, his remains were brought into the church, when a funeral discourse was delivered in German, to a large concourse of people, from Numb. xxiii. 10. Rev. Mr. Bissel, minister of the Presbyterian congregation, preached from the same text in the English language.

## REV. JACOB DESCOMBES.

1798 — 1845.

JACOB DESCOMBES,<sup>1</sup> the only son of Francis and Anna Maria Descombes, was born on the 17th of February, A. D. 1798, at Coblenz, on the Rhine, in the kingdom of Prussia. As his name indicates, he was of French descent. His ancestors, at least paternally, being of the Reformed faith, were compelled to leave France in consequence of religious persecution,—being no doubt of the persecuted Huguenots,—and to seek an asylum elsewhere. Hence, his father was born at Lougel, in the canton of Neuchâtel, in Switzerland. His mother, whose maiden name was Becker, was a native of Ehrenbreitstein. They had but four children—one son and three daughters. The father was a Protestant in principle and by profession, while the mother was an adherent of the Roman Catholic Church. Hence the son became of the same faith and practice with the father, and the three daughters united with the Church of the mother.

The parents were in limited circumstances, and, it is believed, died during the period of Jacob's boyhood or early youth, and that thereafter he lived

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<sup>1</sup> This sketch was furnished by the Rev. I. H. Reiter, of Miamisburg, Ohio. Condensed by the Editor.

with an uncle of his at Cologne. Here, it appears, some provision was made for his intellectual and moral training; for he subsequently attended several of the higher institutions of learning, where he studied the classics and sciences with commendable zeal and success. Having completed his classical course, it was his design to study theology; but, for want of means, he abandoned the idea, and turned his attention to the art of painting.

As regards his early religious impressions, and the time and place of his uniting with the German Reformed Church, there is nothing definitely known. He, however, became a member of the Church before he left his native country.

At the age of twenty-two years, he, in company with Mr. Galwitz, a friend of his, emigrated to the United States of North America, and landed at the city of Baltimore on the 14th of July, 1820. He now commenced his career in the land of his adoption as an artist, by devoting his time and attention to portrait and landscape painting, of which some specimens are still in good preservation. He possessed a good degree of talent and taste for painting, but probably not sufficient to excel in the art.

In the course of his professional duties as an artist, he wended his way to the West in 1822; and, forming an acquaintance with Rev. George Weiss, of New Lancaster, Ohio, he was induced to turn his attention to the study of theology. He accordingly commenced his theological studies with this Father in the Church on the 19th of August, and continued them, with commendable diligence and progress,



for nearly two years. And while his fidelity and application as a student met with the warmest approbation of his preceptor, his general course of conduct was both upright and exemplary.

After having completed his theological studies, on making a formal application, he was examined, licensed, and ordained to the holy ministry by the "Synod of Ohio," during its *first* meeting at New Philadelphia, Ohio, on the 15th of June, 1824. The ordination sermon, appropriate to the occasion, was preached by the Rev. Thomas Winters, from 1 Tim. iv. 16. The whole of the exercises—taking place in the Court-House, in the absence of a church edifice—were full of deep and solemn interest.

Now, in accordance with the call upon which he was ordained, he commenced his labors as a minister of the German Reformed Church on the 4th of July, 1824, in the field which was afterwards known as the "Trenton charge," and embraced at that time the St. Paul's and Fisher's congregations in Butler County, Ohio, and two in Dearborn and Ripley counties, Indiana,—being in all four congregations. To these were added, during the following year, the Millville and Zion's congregations in Butler County, and Dryfork in Hamilton County, Ohio.

From the commencement of his ministry until his marriage, he had his home with Mr. Henry Kern, a member of the German Reformed Church, on Four-Mile Creek, about five miles northward from Hamilton, the county-seat of Butler County, Ohio.

On the 3d of January, 1826, he was united in

marriage to Lydia Yakel, daughter of Michael and Julia Anna Yakel,—formerly from Mahanoy Township, Northumberland County, Pa., but at the time of her marriage residing within two or three miles of Rossville, Butler County, Ohio,—by the Rev. Henry Heincke. His wife was a devoted member of the Lutheran Church, in which connection she remained until her death. Soon after his marriage he located on a ten-acre lot of land in the vicinity of Trenton, and not far from the St. Paul's church, in Butler County, Ohio, and continued to reside there with his family until death called him from his labors on earth. Here in this rural retreat, and in the midst of his beloved family, he spent some of the happiest hours of his life; either in social intercourse, or in invigorating his bodily health by the tillage of his lot, or in preparing himself in mind and heart for the responsible duties of his holy calling. His home thus became to him not only an attractive and cherished spot for recreation, and also for repose from the more arduous labors of the ministry, but also the very centre of his more extended operations in the vineyard of the Lord,—the rural home of a country pastor.

As already intimated, his charge underwent some changes from time to time, both in the number of congregations and in their geographical position. After the first year of his ministry, he never preached to less than five congregations, and, at times, to as many as eight at the same time. There are no less than fourteen different congregations reported in the published Minutes of the Ohio

Synod as having been served by him. They were the following: St. Paul's, Fisher's, Millville, Zion's, Dryfork, Stettler's, Seven-Mile, Salem, Brownsville, Riegel's, Miamisburg, &c.

During his ministry of twenty-one years and three months, Rev. Jacob Descombes baptized one thousand two hundred and sixteen, confirmed two hundred and eighty, had communicants three thousand four hundred and fifty, and deaths one hundred and sixty-five.

It is said that the St. Peter's — or Fisher's — and Zion's congregations were exclusively Lutheran; yet he preached at the former during the whole period of his ministry. He would instruct the youth of the congregation in the catechism, and, after he had done his work faithfully, some Lutheran minister would be called to confirm them and receive them into full membership of the Church. He did this also, to some extent, in some of his other congregations. He thus built up the Lutheran instead of the German Reformed Church. This is a somewhat rare and singular occurrence. He may, however, have been influenced to this charitable and catholic course in consequence of his wife being a Lutheran, as well as all her relations. He had catechized his own wife, and she also was thereafter received into the Lutheran Church, by a Lutheran minister, at the St. Peter's church. When he commenced preaching in that field, things were in rather a loose and irregular condition, and continued thus, without the introduction of strict constitutional order. He had an extensive and labo-

rious field of labor. Some of the congregations lay at a considerable distance from each other, as well as from his residence. For instance, the congregations in Montgomery County, Ohio, were from fifteen to twenty miles distant from his home, and those in the State of Indiana no less than forty miles. Along with this must be considered the bad roads, especially in the winter. Nevertheless, he was indefatigable in the discharge of his duties, overcoming obstacles by dint of perseverance, and rarely failing to fill his regular appointments. He continued thus laborious and faithful to the close of his ministry.

Though generally in the enjoyment of good health, the hour of sore affliction finally arrived. Sickness prevailed to some extent in the community, and one after another was called away by death. Neither did he remain exempt from disease. He early took his bed, to rise no more. He died, of typhoid fever, on the 6th of October, 1845, at two o'clock in the morning. His sufferings, at times, were severe; but he endured all with Christian patience and resignation. He expired in peace, and with the cheering hope of a blessed immortality.

On the following day a large concourse of people assembled to pay to him the last tribute of respect. Before leaving the house, at the request of Mrs. Descombes, — who was confined to bed with the same disease, — Rev. Henry Heincke, Lutheran minister, taking his stand at her bedside, preached a short sermon, in the German language, from John

xvii. 24. The funeral then, in solemn procession, proceeded to the graveyard at the St. Paul's church, where his mortal remains were buried. After the interment, two sermons were preached in the St. Paul's church: the one, in the German, by the Rev. Henry Heincke, from John xiv. 13, and the other, in the English language, by Rev. George Long, from John xii. 26. The church, though a spacious building, was filled to overflowing. The occasion was one of unusual solemnity. Tears profusely flowed; and his members especially mourned the loss of their worthy and beloved pastor.

Scarcely had the mournful scene passed away, when the sad intelligence came that the wife of the deceased was also numbered with the dead. She died just two weeks after her husband, on the 20th of October, 1845, and was buried, on the 22d, by the side of her husband; on which occasion the Rev. George Long preached a funeral sermon.

Thus, after having lived together in the holy bonds of wedlock for nearly twenty years, they died of the same disease, about the same hour of the day, in the same month, and in the same year; and now slumber in death side by side, to await the morning of the resurrection.

Some time after the death of the parents, a monument was erected to their memory, costing about \$75; a portion of which was contributed by the congregation. The monument is a cut stone, square at the base, cone-shaped at the top, and about five feet high, bearing the following inscriptions in German and English:

ON THE WEST SIDE.

“Hier ruhet in Gott, Pfarrer Jacob Descombes; war geboren den 17. Febr., 1798; und starb den 6. October, 1845.”

ON THE SOUTH SIDE.

“In memory of Rev. Jacob Descombes, who departed this life October 6, 1845; aged 47 years, 7 months, and 19 days.”

ON THE EAST SIDE.

“Hier ruhet in Gott, Lydia, Ehefrau von Pfarrer Jacob Descombes; war geboren den 8. Juni, 1808, und starb den 20. October, 1845.”

ON THE NORTH SIDE.

“In memory of Lydia, wife of Rev. Jacob Descombes, who departed this life October 20, 1845; aged 37 years, 4 months, and 12 days.”

## REV. HENRY BIBIGHAUS, D. D.

1777 — 1851.

JOHN BIBIGHAUS, the father of the subject of this sketch, emigrated to the New World, during his younger years, from Witchenstein, Prussia, and settled in Bedminster, Bucks County, Pa., where his son Henry was born, August 2d, 1777. About the year 1800, he was married to Maria Zumstein, who died December 3d, 1842.

Previous to his entering the ministry, he was for a time engaged as a merchant and farmer in the country, and also as organist and teacher, first in Lehigh County and afterwards in the Race St. congregation, Philadelphia. He studied theology under Dr. Samuel Helffenstein, Sr.

Having finished his studies, he was in 1823 elected pastor of the German Reformed Salem's church, on St. John Street, in the Northern Liberties, Philadelphia; and was ordained October 21st, 1824, being then about forty-seven years of age. He continued as pastor of this church up to the time of his death, a period of twenty-seven years. He died at the residence of his son, Samuel H. Bibighaus, in Philadelphia, August 20th, 1851, in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

On Tuesday, 26th, his remains were taken to the

church in St. John Street, followed by a large concourse of people. The Rev. Dr. S. Helffenstein gave out that beautiful German hymn so dear to the departed father,

“Herzlich thut mich verlangen,”

and offered up a prayer. The Rev. Dr. B. S. Schneck delivered a short sermon on the words: “Who being dead, yet speaketh.” The Rev. Mr. Bonekemper, for some time assistant of Dr. Bibighaus, read some facts in the history of the venerable man. These services being closed, the body was deposited in the vault contiguous to the church, where the remains of his sainted wife were already reposing.

In regard to his personal characteristics, one who knew him well has furnished us the following:

“The writer was one of his pupils on the first day he opened his school in Philadelphia, back of the German Reformed church on Race Street, about the year 1807, and continued under his instruction for several years. He had a winning address, by which he gained and retained the affection of all his pupils. His interest in them was manifest to them all. He daily taught them the duties and necessity of religion, and in all his intercourse with them he never lost sight of this important object, whether in conversation or in the studies of the school. All his pupils in after years spoke of him with warm affection, and were at all times pleased to see him; and they always found a welcome reception at his home. Many of them he married, and baptized



and confirmed their children. For a great number of them he preached the funeral sermons. This was generally as affecting to him as to the relatives.

“As a parent, he was strict but affectionate, never losing sight of what he considered necessary for the eternal welfare of his children.

“He was imbued with a true Christian spirit, which manifested itself in all his actions. He was the enemy of no one; even those who had not justly treated him, he approached as if they were his best friends. What he considered his duty, nothing could possibly prevent him from performing. As a friend, he was always true, and could be depended on. No one ever applied to him for assistance who did not receive it, if it was in his power to aid. After he entered the ministry, many of his brother clergymen were assisted by him pecuniarily and otherwise. There are none living who knew him but can testify to this fact.

“In business transactions he was strictly honest and scrupulously exact, whether as merchant, farmer, or otherwise. When a merchant in the interior of this State, he secured the good-will and respect as well as the confidence of all who had any business transactions with him. So highly did they appreciate his strict honesty, peculiar tact and talents as a man of business, that he was frequently solicited to accept nominations for prominent political offices, all of which he respectfully declined. In debate he was invincible, and invariably carried his point, especially on religious subjects. The number of scriptural proofs he would produce, to substan-

tiate his position, was astonishing. He appeared to have the sacred Scriptures entirely at his command, producing proofs from parts of the Bible where, apparently, no one else would think of looking for them. He was, moreover, one of the most agreeable of opponents in debate. His mode of argument was not to break down, but to convince, instruct, and enlighten those who advocated the contrary side of any question. There are many living witnesses to this fact; and many who opposed him on theological subjects, were compelled to acquiesce in his views by the force of his arguments.

“As a farmer, he displayed extraordinary tact and judgment. He cultivated a farm profitably, when others could scarcely make a living on it. The same exalted principles of piety and religion governed him here as everywhere else. Scarcely an hour passed among those about him that something in the shape or form of a sermon was not delivered to them, in a way little expected, but always appropriate and well adapted to the circumstances. So firmly was he convinced of his dependence on Divine Providence, that all his actions seemed to be governed by this view. He never appeared to have any idea of being unsuccessful in anything he undertook, but always confident of being able, with the assistance of God, whom he invoked, to accomplish all he attempted. He was very studious and persevering in the pursuit of knowledge. Theology he had studied many years before his friends were aware of it, although he subsequently went through a course of studies preparatory to his sacred calling.

“He possessed musical abilities of a high order; but they were little known, as he never made any display of them, either as church organist or otherwise. The writer has, however, heard him perform in a manner never excelled.

“He was always disinclined to meddle with the affairs of others under any circumstances; and during all the troubles of the German Reformed church, of which Rev. Dr. Samuel Helffenstein was pastor, and he organist and teacher, he occupied a neutral ground in opposition to numerous solicitations.

“In his general intercourse, he was gentlemanly, polite, kind, and agreeable; too amiable to contradict, which often made one think that he was ignorant of a subject, when he was well informed respecting it. This was a peculiar trait in his character. The situation as pastor of the German Reformed church was never solicited by him, nor was it anticipated. The Rev. Mr. Van der Sloot, when required to be absent, would request Mr. Bibighaus to supply his pulpit, with which request he always complied; and, as he could at any time, and on any ordinary occasion, preach a sermon, he was very frequently called on to do such a favor, until at last the congregation became familiar with his abilities as a preacher. The consequence was, that when the then pastor resigned his charge, Mr. Bibighaus was solicited to fill his place, which he did with diffidence, but with great success.”

“A more lovely specimen of a Christian man and Christian minister,” says another, “we have never known. In him the milder graces and vir-

tues of living piety shone out in bright and harmonious symmetry. A fearless and uncompromising preacher of righteousness, — discriminating, practical, and pungent, — he was at the same time eminently evangelical in all his public and private ministrations. In his whole life, the gentleness and meekness of his divine Master were reflected in a manner rarely witnessed. Who that has seen him in the pulpit, in Synodical Meetings, or in his study, does not yet feel the impress of his noble form, his placid countenance, the subdued tones of his voice, and his engaging and dignified manner in all he said and did." There was much of the patriarchal in his appearance and in his spirit. His flock looked to him as to a father, and he treated them as his children in Christ. His long ministry among them gave him an influence over them, which he used for the noblest Christian purpose, alluring them "to brighter worlds," whilst he himself "led the way."

[In his personal appearance, Father Bibighaus was peculiar. He was tall and slender, with sharp, strongly-marked features, dignified, grave, and venerable, without anything stiff or repulsive. The kindness of his heart and the gentleness of his spirit were beautifully and unmistakably reflected in his countenance. His appearance gave indications of great spirit, energy, and perseverance; and his earnest and successful ministry was but the outward and actual evidence of this peculiar trait in his character. His piety was sincere, earnest, and lovely. He was a man who "feared God and loved righteousness," — holy and pure and just, — bearing the image of his divine Lord and Master.—D. Y. H.]

## REV. JACOB WILLIAM HANGEN.

1805 — 1843.

MR. HANGEN was born in the city of Philadelphia, on the 5th day of March, 1805.

He early prosecuted his studies preparatory to the holy ministry under the care of Rev. Jacob William Dechant. He was ordained in the year of our Lord 1825. His first charge was Columbia and Warren, in the State of New York, where he remained about five years. From this charge he removed to Root, N. Y. It is not known to us how long he remained in this charge.<sup>1</sup> He afterwards returned to Pennsylvania, and took charge of congregations in Bucks County, namely, Hilltown, Towamencin, Keeler's church, and one other, the name of which is not known to us.

He subsequently took charge of the congregation at the Trappe, and four others connected with it. His call is dated April 27th, 1841.

Mr. Hangen died at the house of Mr. Langabach, in Skippack Township, Montgomery County, at about six o'clock, on Monday evening, February 23d, 1843, aged 37 years, 10 months, and 18 days. He preached his last sermon at Mr. L.'s house, took sick soon after, and died in a few days. He had labored much during the whole of the early

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<sup>1</sup> About ten years. See Min., 1840, p. 85. — D. Y. H.

part of the winter, and his physical system gave way under incessant toil and severe exposure.

A short time before his end, he asked the physician to give him his candid opinion as to his situation and prospects of recovery. Upon receiving answer that if a reaction did not soon take place he could not live over twenty-four hours, he replied: "I feel prepared to die; but, as I always held that so long as life remains we should take care of it, I expect you to use your skill, and should it prove—as I expect—that there is no hope, I have resigned myself into the hands of God, into whose paternal care I also intrust my weeping wife and five small children."

As he expected, it became every moment more evident that his sickness was drawing towards a fatal conclusion. "A few hours before his death he called to his bedside the elders of the church, and such members of the congregation and other friends as had assembled at his request, to see him for the last time, when with a loud and firm tone of voice he prayed with them and admonished them to remain firm in their faith, to stand by the Church, to avoid dissension and disunion, and to call upon sinners everywhere to repent. After exhorting for a length of time, and giving all the necessary directions for the comfort of his family, he sang a hymn with them and bade them depart in peace."<sup>1</sup> He now returned his thanks to the physicians for their kindness, took leave of his family and friends, and in a few more moments his spirit returned unto God who gave it. So soon was the hymn of praise

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<sup>1</sup> See Ger. Ref. Messenger, Feb. 8th, 1843.

which had just died away from his feeble lips resumed in the glorious choir of the redeemed around the eternal throne.

He was buried, on the following Thursday, in the graveyard at the Trappe. A large concourse of people followed him to his resting-place. On a marble slab, laid horizontally, behind the church, is the following memorial:

In  
Memory of the  
REV. JACOB W. HANGEN,  
who was born March 5th, 1805,  
and died January 23d, 1843,  
Aged 37 years, 10 months,  
and 18 days.

This tomb was erected by the congregation as a token of love to their departed pastor.

At the time of Mr. Hangen's death, the Synod was in session at Lebanon. The consistory of his charge communicated the sad event to that reverend body. A suitable notice of his death was immediately taken by Synod, in which there is, besides a proper tribute to his worth, a touching allusion to the fact that this zealous man seemed to have become a martyr to those excessive labors which a charge too heavy had devolved upon him; and the hope is expressed that the ranks of the ministry may be so increased that the charges of the present pastors, and consequently their labors, may be lessened.

Mr. Hangen was married to Miss Mary Magdalene Engelman. She, with five small children, survived him.

REV. JOHN HILLEGAS.<sup>1</sup>

1800 — 1828.

MR. HILLEGAS belongs to the earlier race of Western ministers—not indeed to the pioneers strictly so called, but to the second class, at least, whose arduous labors and frequent exposures fully entitle them to a place among the “Fathers.”

John Hillegas was born in Montgomery County, Pa., November 12th, 1800.<sup>2</sup> He emigrated to Montgomery County, Ohio, with his parents, in 1816. Being at an early age religiously impressed, he was received into the Church in 1818, by the Rev. J. William Dechant, in St. John’s church, in Miami Township. His heart was effectually drawn to the gospel ministry; and, after pursuing his theological and other studies for some time, under the direction of the Rev. H. Heincke, a Lutheran minister in the neighborhood, and, afterwards, with the Rev. George Weiss, of Lancaster, Ohio, he was licensed and ordained, and settled as pastor over three congregations in and around Carrollton, Carroll County,—then called Centreville, Columbiana County. His ordination took place on Tuesday

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by the Editor.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. J. H. Reiter.—West. Miss., April 9th, 1857. Also, Ger. Ref. Mess., April 22d, 1857.



evening, May 23d, 1826, in connection with that of his friend and fellow-student, the Rev. David Long, who also labored but a short time, when he was suddenly cut down by the cholera, in 1833, in the full vigor of manhood.

One year after his ordination and settlement in the ministry, Mr. Hillegas reported six congregations; from which we gather that, by his active and devoted labors, he organized, in the course of a single year, three new congregations. But his ministerial career was an exceedingly brief one; for, on the 28th day of June, 1828, only two years after having been solemnly set apart and ordained to the office and work of the ministry, he was called away by death, after a severe and protracted spell of illness, aged 27 years, 7 months, and 16 days.

“Mr. Hillegas was a man of good natural endowments; and it was his constant aim and endeavor to improve the talents bestowed upon him, and to employ them to the welfare of men and the glory of God. He thus grew in knowledge and grace, and honorably magnified his office. He was conscientious and faithful in the discharge of all his public and private duties; and his piety and moral deportment were of an undoubted and unexceptionable character. As a Christian, he was humble and devoted; as a preacher, he united the elements of earnestness and love; and as a pastor, he was kind, affable, and exemplary. Respected and esteemed by the community generally, he was especially beloved by the people of his own charge, among whom he labored with much acceptance.

But his earnest and efficient labors on earth are ended. His mission of winning souls to Christ is brought to a close. His record and reward are on high. Peace to his ashes, and a happy immortality to his spirit."

The Hillegas family, from which the subject of this sketch is a descendant, is one of the largest and most respectable family connections in Eastern Pennsylvania. They make up a large portion of several of our flourishing congregations in Montgomery and adjoining counties, and are, as a whole, warmly attached to the German Reformed Church, of which they are generally members. Our own ancestors belonged to this noble stock, and we deem it a pleasure to record this instance of Christian fidelity and pious devotion among the early ministers of the great West—the heroic heralds of the cross!

REV. JACOB BEECHER.<sup>1</sup>

1799 — 1831.

THE memory of this excellent man is still held in grateful remembrance by many who once enjoyed his ministry. He was truly a good man, and seemed intent on doing good to his fellow-men.

Mr. Beecher was born near Petersburg, in Adams County, Pa., on the 2d day of May, 1799. His parents were respectable, lived on a farm, and were in easy circumstances. He continued to reside in the place of his nativity, assisting his father on the farm during the summer and attending a country school in winter, until the spring of 1814, when his parents removed with him to Hagerstown. Here he was under the earnest and efficient ministry of Rev. James R. Reily, at that time the pastor of the Hagerstown charge.

In his twentieth year, while attending catechetical lectures, he became deeply interested in the claims of religion, and anxious to make himself useful in the Church of his fathers. Some time in the year 1822 he commenced his studies in the Academy at Hagerstown; and at the expiration of

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<sup>1</sup> Re-written and slightly changed by the Editor. See Mag. Ger. Ref. Ch., Sept. 1831.

about twelve months he repaired to Jefferson College at Canonsburg, Pa., and became a studious member of that institution. During his stay here, his piety received a new impetus and a deeper tone during a season of special religious interest that occurred among the students and the citizens of the place; and during his entire subsequent course of study it continued to influence him and bring him forward in the Christian life, until finally he became the ardent, zealous, and devoted minister of Christ, for which he was so justly distinguished.

In the fall of 1824 he completed his college course, and as the Reformed Theological Seminary was then not yet in existence, he immediately entered the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J., where he prosecuted his theological studies. During this period his health became very much impaired, and after two years he was compelled to relinquish his studies, and retire from the institution for a season. He had contracted a severe cold, which settled on his lungs, and subsequently brought on repeated and most violent hemorrhages. In one of these attacks he was brought nigh unto death, but by the blessing of God recovered from it in due time.

After his restoration, he repaired to the Seminary of the German Reformed Church, then located at Carlisle, Pa., where he pursued his theological studies, in connection with that of the German language, for the space of six months, until the fall of 1826, when he was set apart and ordained to the gospel ministry by the Synod of the German Re-

formed Church, which held its sessions that year in Frederick City, Md.<sup>1</sup>

He immediately accepted a call from the German Reformed congregations of Shepherdstown, Martinsburg, and Smithfield, Va., and entered with zeal upon the work before him. In this charge he continued to labor with peculiar success for the period of five years, although his labors were repeatedly interrupted by the declining state of his health, which required him to absent himself from his people at several different times, for a season, in order to recruit his strength. But during these seasons of leisure he could not consent to be idle. He uniformly united the works of benevolence with the pursuit of his health. Once he made a brief missionary tour to North and South Carolina, and visited and encouraged the long-neglected churches in that region, and made arrangements to send them pastors. Twice he engaged for a time in the toils and self-denying labors of a responsible agency, and as often returned to his pastoral charge with increased strength and brighter hopes. He had spent the winter of 1830-'31 in the South, in the service of the Sunday-School Union, and returned late in the spring greatly improved. But how deceitful were these flattering appearances! Only a few weeks after his return, he was again taken with bleeding of the lungs. It was his last attack.

Mr. Beecher died at his residence in Shepherdstown, Va., on Friday morning, about ten o'clock, July 15th, 1831, aged 32 years, 2 months, and 13 days.

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<sup>1</sup> Syn. Min., 1826, pp. 11, 13, 14, 31.

Although so young, he accomplished more good, and did more work for the Church, than many who were permitted to spend a long life in the ministry. He did not live for his own pleasure, but for the honor of Him "who loved him and gave himself for him." He sought not his own, but the things which are Jesus Christ's. The great and stirring interests of the Redeemer's kingdom were his favorite pursuits, in which he could forget all others, and for which he was willing, if need be, to forsake all that was dear to him on earth.

His exertions in the winter of 1828-'29, to raise a capital of \$10,000 for the Theological Seminary of the Church, then yet in its feeble infancy, saved the institution at that critical period from ruin, and gave its friends new courage, and inspired them with increased zeal in the work of sustaining it and advancing its interests. One prominent matter of regret to him, in view of his early death, was the thought that he could not live to aid in the full and permanent endowment of the Theological Seminary.

The cause of Sunday-schools, in which he engaged with all his heart, owes much to his exertions and prayers. He spent one year for the Sunday-School Union in the Valley of the Mississippi, with a view of establishing schools and awakening an interest in the subject. He has the honor also of planning the first Education Society in the Reformed Church of this country.

Accustomed to elevated and extensive views of duty, he was constantly meditating plans of general usefulness to the Church of Christ. He was indeed,

in all respects, a model and an example to all younger ministers. Blessed are they who enter the gospel ministry in the spirit, the devotion, and the self-sacrifice of Mr. Beecher. Even when dead, and gone from the stage of earthly toil, their memory will be gratefully cherished; and, like him, though dead, they will still live and speak by an influence left behind which shall never cease.

Mr. Beecher's early death, especially at that time, when his services were so much needed and so much appreciated by the Church, was truly a severe loss to the Church and to society at large, of which he was so useful a member. His exemplary piety, consistent deportment, and numerous labors of love are pleasantly and gratefully remembered by many who "continue to this present." He was indeed a man of God, who, in every situation in which he was placed, and under all the circumstances of life, possessed his soul in patience, and maintained an intimate communion with his Saviour.

Mr. Beecher was married to a Miss Mitchell, of Philadelphia, in May, 1827. To her he was devotedly attached; whom, together with two interesting little sons, he commended most earnestly and touchingly, on his dying bed, to the care and keeping of his God and Redeemer. His two sons have since followed their father to their final home.

As Mr. Beecher lived a life of faith and hope in Christ, so he was a man of faith and hope in his death. One of the witnesses of his dying hours said: "His calmness and strength of hope in the prospect of death were unbroken. His mind was

entirely composed and submissive, and his views sometimes rapturous. He seemed to be fully emptied of self, and lost in adoring contemplations of the riches of divine grace. In the course of one of his last conversations, he exclaimed, with the deepest emphasis and feeling, "It is all of grace." When he spoke of his approaching exit, a smile was seen to play upon his lips; affording an assurance that death had been disarmed of its terrors. All his own wishes were lost in the will of God; and all his worldly interests he was happy to trust into the hand of his Redeemer. As the last gleams of thought were streaming from his eye, he turned to one who waited beside his bed, and said: "The day of my redemption draweth nigh." These were almost the last words that fell from his lips, and in a few moments afterwards his soul spread its wings for immortality. Thus happily ended the days of Mr. Beecher on earth; but for him "the eternal years" continue in heaven.

For those who throng the eternal throne,  
Lost are the tears we shed;  
They are the living, they alone,  
Whom here we call the dead!



REV. DAVID LONG.<sup>1</sup>

1801—1833.

DAVID LONG was the son of George Long and Margaret, his wife, whose maiden name was Green. They were both born and reared in Lebanon County, Pa. Soon after their marriage, they removed to Augusta County, Virginia. Here David was born, June 22d, 1801. The father was for some years an active and efficient Elder in the Church. The son, growing up under such favorable influences, early manifested an inclination to piety. Having been believingly devoted to God in holy baptism, he was, at the proper age, instructed in the doctrines of the Church; and, in his seventeenth year, received as a full member of the same by the Rev. Dr. John Brown, of blessed memory.<sup>2</sup>

About this time, 1818, his parents, with a family of ten children—five sons and five daughters—moved to Green County, Ohio, and settled on lands lying on the west bank of the Little Miami. It was here that the riper years of his youth were spent by Mr. Long. He is said to have been serious, thoughtful, and studious, and thus to have acquired a large amount of useful knowledge, even while young, by means of private reading.

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<sup>1</sup> Re-written and enlarged by the Editor.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. J. H. Reiter, Christian World, Aug. 12th, 1869.

His theological studies he pursued under the care and tuition of the Rev. George Weiss, in New Lancaster, Ohio. His course extended over about three years. After having completed his studies, he received a call from the Somerset charge, in Perry County, Ohio, composed of some four or five congregations. He applied to Synod for license and ordination, at its annual meeting in Lancaster, Ohio, in May, 1826. His examination having proved satisfactory, he was invested with the sacred office, being ordained by a committee, consisting of Revs. Thomas Winters, Benjamin Faust, and David Shearer, on Tuesday evening, May 23d, 1826.

In the year 1828, Mr. Long was married to Miss Sarah Mechlin, who, together with three children—one son and two daughters—survived her husband. She was subsequently married to Mr. Michael Mechlin, and died January 24th, 1868.

The charge to which Mr. Long was called at the commencement of his ministry, he continued to serve to the end of his life—a period of about seven years. He preached in both languages. His ministry was greatly blessed; and by his earnest and successful efforts, he succeeded in laying the foundation of one of the most important charges in the State of Ohio. “According to his first statistical report, rendered in 1827, his charge numbered one hundred and seventy-six communicants; and, in 1833, the number is given at two hundred and seventy-two.” Such was his success, as indicated by this increase in the membership of his charge. From 1829 till the close of his ministry, he served

only four congregations, namely, Zion's, Lebanon, Smith's, and Binkley's.

Mr. Long was removed very suddenly. In 1833, the cholera made its appearance in that part of Ohio, and carried off a large number of persons. During this trying time the servant of the Lord stood firm, and attended faithfully and lovingly to the wants of the sick and the dying—accompanying them to the grave with the solemn benediction of the Church. On the 18th of June, he buried one of his members who had fallen a victim to this fearful scourge. He returned from the funeral in apparently good health; but soon afterwards was violently attacked, and in less than forty-eight hours was a corpse.

Only about three weeks before his death he attended, for the last time, the meeting of Synod at Xenia, and took an active part in its proceedings. He was appointed by Synod to visit the congregations in and around Canton, after harvest, as a kind of supply in their vacancy. Instead of this, he was permitted to take a longer and better journey to that land "where the weary are at rest."<sup>1</sup>

His remains were deposited in the graveyard attached to the St. Paul's church; but, owing to the terror inspired by the dread disease, no funeral discourse was delivered at the time. Some two or three weeks subsequently, Father Weiss, his former preceptor, preached an appropriate sermon in the church to a very large and deeply-affected audience, on Heb. xiii. 7, 8.

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<sup>1</sup> Messenger, German Reformed Church, Oct., 1833.

His grave was subsequently marked by the erection of a plain sandstone, two feet and a half high and eighteen inches wide, bearing the following simple, but beautiful and touching, inscription :

In Memory of  
REV. DAVID LONG.  
Died June 19th, 1833 ;  
Aged 31 years, 11 months, and 27 days.

Wie schläft der Freund so sanft und gut,  
Gott gab ihn uns zum Hirte ;  
Auch Er, der alle Wunder thut,  
Nahm ihn schon zu sich wieder ;  
Ruhe da, O Freund,  
Mit Gott vereint.

Physically, Mr. Long was highly favored, "possessing considerable muscular power and spring, and well constituted for continued effort and active pursuits." He was of ordinary height, "rather spare, somewhat stooped in the shoulders, and of sharp and angular features." He was of a cheerful and happy disposition, with a vast amount of life and vivacity of spirit, — bordering on excess, perhaps. He was, however, an earnest man ; loved his work, and sincerely sought to please his Master and win souls for His kingdom. He possessed good natural gifts, studied diligently, and became quite a respectable scholar and theologian. He was a good sermonizer, and possessed excellent speaking talents ; his sermons being instructive and edifying. As a pastor, he was faithful and kind ; and, as one of the early ministers, did a good and great work for the Church in the West.

As a Christian, he was fixed and settled in his principles; which he exemplified in his daily walk and conversation. He was greatly beloved by his people; and his early and sudden death was universally lamented. He died in the assurance of faith, in the midst of fearful physical sufferings, and gently passed over to the bright and beautiful "inheritance among the saints in light."

## REV. RICHARD ADAMS FISHER.

1805 — 1857.

RICHARD ADAMS FISHER was born in Heidelberg Township, Berks County, Pa., not far from Reading, on the 25th of October, 1805. His childhood and early youth were spent under the parental roof: his father, John Fisher, being a respectable farmer, and a member of the German Reformed Church, Richard was baptized in infancy, and at the proper age received the solemn rite of confirmation. His heart was early inclined to piety; it was also early drawn towards the holy ministry, which, as he grew up, he felt more and more to be his proper calling in life. At a comparatively early age he commenced his preparatory studies under his pastor, the Rev. F. Herman, Jr., and after a year or two, in 1822, he commenced the study of theology under the Rev. Dr. Herman, of Montgomery County, with whom he continued several years.

He was licensed and ordained in the autumn of 1826, and soon after received and accepted a call to the Sunbury charge in Northumberland County, where he entered upon his duties early in the year 1827.

In 1831, Mr. Fisher was united in marriage with Miss Amelia Catharine Weiser, eldest daughter of

the Hon. George Weiser, of Sunbury. This union proved a source of mutual happiness and comfort. The sharer of his joys was also the lightener of his sorrows, and deeply did he feel, and frequently express to his intimates, the grateful feelings of his heart for her whom God had given him. Six sons and four daughters were given them; these with the widow survive him. Among the pleasantest recollections of our life are the hours spent in this interesting family in the early part of our own ministry.

Mr. Fisher began his work in the charge to which he was called with youthful hope, with Christian courage, with intelligent, well-tempered zeal, and with true devotion to the Church in which he was born and nurtured. He had counted the cost, and was willing to make the sacrifice and endure the toil required.

“It is well known,” says the Rev. D. Y. Heisler, in his funeral sermon, “that few men have had a harder field to cultivate, more labors to perform, or greater difficulties to encounter, than Mr. Fisher. He had to contend with hardships innumerable; with extent of country—which required an almost incredible amount of travel—not less, I presume, than fifty or sixty thousand miles, just in the performance of his ordinary duties. He was compelled to serve an excessive number of congregations, which imposed on him an inconceivable amount of physical labor. He had to contend with the inconveniences of a mountainous country, which required an unusual amount of exposure to the

inclemencies of the weather — to heat and cold — while traversing these hills and dales in the discharge of his official duties. He had to contend, also, with moral and spiritual difficulties, which far transcended all those which we have already noticed. A rough and hilly country, while yet comparatively new, almost always brings with it a corresponding moral complexion. And it is well known that, during the last years of his ministry, Mr. Fisher had to pass through difficulties which may well be characterized as ‘fiery trials.’

“When we remember all this — the accumulated mass of toils, trials, and difficulties, — in connection with the immense amount of ministerial labor which, during a period of nearly thirty years, he performed, and then, at the end of his life, when thin and pale, and hardly able to speak, to hear him say, as I did: ‘I shall not be here long; I am not afraid to die — am anxious to go to my Saviour;’ and when reminded that it must be especially desirable to die, in view of the hard life which he had to live, he once more opened his large and friendly eyes, and, fixing them steadfastly on me, said: ‘Yes, sir; but I am not sorry that I have preached the gospel.’ When we remember all this, are we not reminded of the dying words of the aged Paul: ‘I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto me at that day;



and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.'

"From what I know of the character of our departed brother, and of the difficulties which attended his ministry, I feel convinced that justice cannot easily be done him, especially by strangers. If, in a situation such as his, a minister remains steadfast, and keeps the faith of his fathers, I think we may safely say that he has an unusual amount of energy of character, perseverance, and fidelity to his early vows. And you will pardon me, if I yet say that I am convinced the name of our brother will stand higher in the history of our Church *hereafter* than it ever did while he lived and labored and slaved himself in these hills, with no one to tell the world the untold anguish of his noble heart, or to recount in the ears of listening crowds the incredible hardships which he endured and the labors he performed. The hand of Christian affection will yet gather up the thrilling incidents in his life and ministry, and send them beyond these hills and valleys among which they occurred. He was a good man, and did a good and noble work, the blessed fruits of which will continue to appear and ripen long after the present generation has passed away and gone to their final, their everlasting reward."

Under all his labors, his physical constitution, which was not naturally of the robust kind, held out with remarkable firmness for many years. Gradually, however, in the latter part of his life, his health began to fail. The earthly house of his tabernacle began to sink under his toils.

During the autumn of 1854 he passed through a most painful and protracted illness, after which he was for some time unable to engage in the active duties of his office. It was then that he resigned his charge, in which he had so long and with so much self-denial toiled and labored and worn out his physical energies. Rest and the use of proper remedies were the means of gradually improving his health. As soon as his physical strength was in a good degree restored, he was no more at rest, but longed for the work to which he had devoted all his life. He accordingly accepted a call from the Millersburg charge, in Dauphin County, in the spring of 1856. But it soon became manifest that his work on earth was drawing to a close. He was not equal to the labors required. The Lord had need of him in another sphere. During the meeting of Synod in Reading, in October, 1856, all could see, from his feeble and emaciated form, that he would not be long on earth. He said himself to some one: "This is the last meeting of Synod for me!" Alas, yes! it was the *last* meeting among his brethren at Synod. He lingered on, however, until the 27th of January, 1857, when his Lord and Redeemer called him home.

Mr. Fisher was confined to his room and bed about ten weeks before his end. There was a complication of diseases, ending at last in consumption, which did its work slowly. During this waiting period, he was meekly cheerful and calmly resigned. Not long before his death, he said to a ministerial brother who visited him: "How glad am I that my

time is up. I have had a hard and trying history; yet I do not regret that I have preached the gospel." "He was conscious," says another, "of his approaching end. It was a pleasure to be with him in his dying hours. He ended his earthly existence in the bright hope of a blissful immortality."

Among others who visited him near his end was the Rev. Mr. Heisler, who succeeded him in the Sunbury charge. Of his interview with him, he gives the following interesting account:

"On Wednesday previous to his decease, Jan. 21st, 1857, I started from home, but found the snow so much drifted that it was impossible for me to reach his house on that day. On Thursday, about noon, I came to the parsonage, and found the dying brother in a very feeble state. When I entered his room he extended to me his hand, and immediately burst into tears, saying, 'I am so glad to see you.'

"We had a good deal of conversation during the several hours which I spent with him. He appeared perfectly resigned; spoke calmly of his approaching death, and expressed the firm conviction of an interest in the eternal life beyond. He requested me to administer to him the Holy Communion, as he wished once more, before leaving the world, to commune with his Saviour, in the symbols of His body and blood, as he expressed himself. After prayer and other suitable preparatory exercises, I administered to him and the elder portion of the family, with a few others, this most solemn of Christian ordinances. It was an affecting scene, but full of hope and joy. In handing him the

sacred elements, I used, among others, the words, 'unto the resurrection of the body,' to which he added, very emphatically, 'AND AN ETERNAL LIFE.'

"After some further conversation in reference more particularly to his spiritual interests, he asked me whether Mrs. Fisher had told me his wishes in regard to his funeral, and some other little matters. When answered in the affirmative, he said, 'That will do,' and immediately closed his eyes. I paused a few moments, and then took an affectionate leave of him, feeling that it was good to be in the chamber of the dying saint. At such a moment, the involuntary prayer of the stricken heart is, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.'"

Mr. Fisher died at the parsonage, in Lykens Valley, on Tuesday, January 27th, 1857, in the fifty-second year of his age, and the thirty-second of his ministry. The Church mourns after him, and feels that he has left a large vacancy in the hearts of his brethren and people, but hails him happy above. He was buried in Sunbury—where he had resided and preached for a period of nearly thirty years—on Friday, the 30th of January, amid a large concourse of people, who came to pay their last tribute to his remains. The Rev. Mr. Heisler preached an appropriate discourse on the words: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The Revs. George Wolff, A. G. Dole, J. Fritzinger, and C. Z. Weiser, participated in the services; as also the Revs. P. Born and Neiman of the Lutheran, and J. Rheardon of the Presbyterian Church.

His record enumerates twelve hundred baptisms, received by confirmation between five and six hundred persons into the Church, buried nearly five hundred, preached about four thousand sermons, and assisted in ordaining twelve ministers.

In stature, Mr. Fisher was of medium size, slim, straight, and genteel in his appearance and bearing. Always modest, in larger and more public circles he was disposed to silence; but in more private social intercourse he was remarkably open and free, cheerful and pleasant, frank and friendly. His mind was clear and logical, which was therefore also the character of his sermons. His preaching was always substantial and instructive, calculated rather to make permanent impressions than to produce visible present effect. As a preacher, he prepared well, and therefore wore well. He never rambled or repeated himself, but kept to his subject, made progress in it, and followed it out to its conclusions. In his duties, he was decided, prompt, and regular; in his devotional habits, unostentatious and sincere; in his joys, grateful and benevolent; in his sorrows and trials, patient and meek.

Many, many sacredly pleasant memories come up before us now, associated with the name of him, the imperfect sketch of whose life and labors we are about to close. Lovelier than the "sun-bright scenes of day" which mirror themselves in thy glad waters, noble Susquehanna, are the images of social life and love, which, along with these, lie in our memory forever. And thou, sainted brother, art ever in the picture, which, in lonely hours, we gaze at with solemn joy, but can show to none other.

REV. JACOB FOLLMER DIEFFEN-  
BACHER.

1802—1842.

THE ancestors of Mr. Dieffenbacher emigrated from Germany at an early day. They were generally farmers by occupation, honest, respectable, and pious; and mostly members of the German Reformed Church. Frederick Dieffenbacher, the father of the subject of this Memoir, was, however, a blacksmith, but gave up that business about the year 1812, when he removed to Union County, Pa.; where, besides farming, he carried on a somewhat extensive business of a mixed character, such as sawing, carding, weaving, and cloth-dressing.

Among eight or nine children was Jacob Follmer Dieffenbacher. He was born not far from Milton, in Northumberland County, Pa., December 18th, 1802. His mother's maiden name was Follmer, and from her family he received his middle name. In boyhood, already, he was of a pious cast of mind, sober and reflective in his habits, thinking much and speaking little. When he did speak, it was always with deliberation, and with well-chosen words.

During his minority, he was employed in assisting his father and brothers on the farm, the saw-mill,

and cloth-factory. In the meantime he received such ordinary school education as was at that time commonly received among the farmers of Pennsylvania. He early felt what he believed to be the divine Spirit drawing his heart towards the office of the holy ministry. In order, in due time, to realize the object of his wishes, he began the work of mental preparation; and, accordingly, began to attend the academy at Milton. Here he made good progress in his studies, and soon after entered the Theological Seminary, then under the care of Rev. Dr. Lewis Mayer, at Carlisle, Pa.

Having completed his course of study, he appeared at the meeting of Synod which was held at Mifflinburg, Pa., Sept. 29th, 1828, and presented a call from the Sharpsburg charge, in Washington County, Md., which was also accompanied by a request for his examination and ordination.<sup>1</sup> His examination proved satisfactory, and he was accordingly ordained at that meeting of Synod, in company with six others who had been examined and approved at the same time.<sup>2</sup>

He proceeded to his field in the Sharpsburg charge, including also, at that time, Boonsboro, Md. Here he remained but a short time. In 1830, he received and accepted a call from the congregation in Mercersburg, and others associated with it. On the 8th of April, 1830, he was married to Miss Jane E. Officer, of Carlisle, Pa. He continued in

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, 1828, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Namely, J. H. Crawford, Henry Wagner, J. G. Fritchey, Daniel Zacharias, J. Casper Bucher, and John Hautz, p. 24.

Mercersburg till the spring of 1832, laboriously and zealously attending to the duties of his office.

About the close of his ministry in Mercersburg, he was severely afflicted in the death of his wife. She died on the 13th of February, 1832, and is remembered as a most estimable woman; respected and beloved by all who knew her for her fine Christian spirit. They had one son, whom they named Calvin Officer.

He now received a call from Woodstock, Shenandoah County, Virginia, which he accepted; and on the 16th of May, 1832, took charge of his new field, which consisted of the congregations Woodstock, Pine, Salem, Zion, and St. Ann.<sup>1</sup>

On the first of October, 1833, he consummated a second marriage, with Dorothea, a daughter of George Hottel, Esq., of Shenandoah County, Va.; who is still living, and is now the wife of Henry Mentz, Esq., of Zelienople, Pa. Four sons—who all survived him—were the fruit of this union.

He cultivated his field in Virginia with much zeal. “He was indefatigable in his labors, both in and out of the pulpit; and they were crowned with success. Each communion season bears testimony that the church increased in numbers and in piety.”<sup>2</sup>

Some time in the year 1833, he preached a sermon—which was published, and a copy of which is in our possession—on “The Scripture Doctrine of

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<sup>1</sup> Evangelische Zeitung, May, 1832, p. 78. Christ. Zeitschrift, Vol. VI., No. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Rev. John G. Wolff, July 18, 1856.



Water Baptism, of Infant Baptism, and Baptism by Pouring or Sprinkling Water." It is a pamphlet of thirty pages, and is well constructed and well written.

In the year 1837, he was called upon to encounter one of those sudden reverses against which no Christian foresight can guard. He was called upon and urged, by several ministers of other denominations then residing in the place, to deliver an address in behalf of the Colonization Society. The matter commending itself to his judgment and heart, he consented; and, at the appointed time, in the presence of a large assembly in the Lutheran church in Woodstock, he delivered a faithful and fearless sermon on the subject in hand and its various bearings. The sermon was based on the words of Paul: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men," (Gal. vi. 10.) His divisions beautifully exhausted the true sense of the text, thus:

- I. The duty enjoined, — "Do good."
- II. The objects of this duty, — "All men."
- III. The rule to be observed in doing it, — "As ye have opportunity."

On the first and second heads he is very brief. In the third, he labors to show the advantages that will result both to the white and colored races from colonizing the free people of color on the western coast of Africa.

This discourse was made the pretext for accusations against him as an abolitionist. Every thing that was possible was done by his accusers to heap opprobrium upon him, and also to have him con-

victed before the court as a violator of law. "He was slandered and abused; some of the most foul-mouthed language was paraded in the county papers, and approved by the so-called respectability of the town. Money was raised to employ additional counsel to aid in the prosecution; but it was

‘Ocean into tempest tossed’

to no purpose, for he was honorably acquitted and discharged.

"After the trial, to the honor of both parties, and for the future peace of the community in which the sermon had been preached, the olive-branch was extended, and accepted. The following week, the compromise, as agreed upon, was published in the county paper, without comment from either party, which virtually exculpated him from everything which is not both legal and Christian."

After this, his labors in Virginia were short. Conscious that he had greatly suffered both in mind and body from passing through such a conflict, and believing that another could be more useful in his field, he resolved to seek a more genial clime.

In January, 1839, he started on a missionary tour, under the auspices, it is thought, of his Classis, to the northwestern counties in Pennsylvania. On the 3d of February he reached Harmony, in Butler County. Here he preached two sermons—one German, the other English—to the congregation then vacant. He then went still further west and north on his mission, preaching in Erie and other places; and, on his return, he preached again in

Harmony. On the 10th of March, he received a call from this and several smaller congregations in the vicinity, which he accepted. He then returned to Virginia for his family, which, meanwhile, had remained there, and soon after removed to Harmony, where he entered upon his duties as pastor April 28, 1839; and was formally installed on the 21st of June following, by Revs. David Kemmerer and Robert Douglas.

In this charge he labored with his usual zeal and faithfulness, "doing his duty in all sincerity, and speaking the truth without fear or favor." In addition to preaching, circumstances caused him to feel it his duty to devote part of his time to teaching. He was much respected and beloved, not only by the people of his charge, but also by the whole community in the midst of which he lived. Most consoling to him was this Christian sympathy and love after his days of bitterness.

In the latter part of January, 1842, he went, on one occasion, to minister in one of his more remote congregations; having been exposed to inclement weather, and having naturally a feeble constitution, he contracted a severe cold. A few days after his return home he took sick, his disease taking the form of typhus fever. He endured but a short time, and died on the 4th day of February, in the year of our Lord 1842, aged 39 years, 1 month, and 16 days. His end was peace. As in life, so in death he adorned the doctrines of God his Saviour.

On the following Sabbath his remains were interred in the graveyard at Harmony, amid a large

crowd of such as had loved him in life and now mourned after him in his death. Two funeral discourses were delivered on the solemn occasion, — one, in German, by the Rev. Mr. Schweizerbarth, a Lutheran, and the other by Rev. Mr. Worthington, of the Methodist Church; both of whom bore testimony to his disinterested labors and excellent Christian spirit.

His resting-place is marked by a marble monument, erected by his sons, upon which are inscribed, besides the passage Ps. cxxvi. 6, his name, his age, and the date of his death. His life and labors on earth extended only over a brief period; but a great consolation lies in this, that the reward in the life to come is measured, not by the length of the time, but by the faithfulness of the service. “Be thou faithful unto death,” — whether it come at the end of a short or a long life, “and I will give thee a crown of life.”

REV. DANIEL B. LERCH.<sup>1</sup>

18\*\* — 1834.

OF the early history of Mr. Lerch we cannot speak with confidence. He was born either in Lebanon or Berks County, Pa., where also most likely he spent his childhood and early youth. He was for several years a student of the late Rev. Isaac Gerhart, while residing at Millersburg, Dauphin County, Pa. In 1827 or 1828, he entered the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church, then located at Carlisle, Pa., and continued to prosecute his studies there under the care and tuition of the late Rev. Dr. Lewis Mayer until 1830, when he was ordained to the holy ministry, at the meeting of Synod held at Hagerstown, Md., in September of that year.<sup>2</sup>

Immediately after the meeting of Synod he started for North Carolina. Having received a call from some (four) congregations in Rowan County, N. C., formerly served by Father Boger, who, on account of his increasing age and infirmities, had resigned the charge, he at once entered upon the duties of his office as his successor. In this, his first and only field, he preached about four years, with great acceptance and success, in both the English and German languages.

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by the Editor.<sup>2</sup> Syn. Min., 1830, pp. 8, 16.

Designing to make the South his permanent home, he purchased a small farm, built a house, and endeavored to get himself comfortably fixed; when, suddenly, he was smitten down by disease and called away by death. He was taken with bronchitis, which extended to the lungs, and soon put an end to his earnest and valuable life, and closed up his ministry on earth. This sad event occurred in the year 1834.

A few days later he was buried at the "Stone church," in Rowan County, N. C., "amidst great lamentation and mourning," and in the presence of an immense concourse of people.<sup>1</sup> The late Rev. William C. Bennet, a fellow-laborer in the Southern field, and the nearest ministerial brother, preached the funeral sermon, and attended to the remaining sad offices connected with the solemn and interesting occasion. He left a disconsolate widow and an only child — a daughter — to mourn his death and their own irreparable loss.

He was married to a Miss Spotswood, of Carlisle, Cumberland County, Pa., and sister to the wife of the late Rev. John H. Crawford, at whose instance, mainly, he went to the South. Both of the sisters are still living in South Carolina.

Mr. Lerch was a man of small stature, but talented, pretty well educated, and a pleasing and popular preacher in both languages. He possessed fine social qualities, was a pleasant and genial companion, ardent in temperament, and of undoubted piety. His period of active service in the Church

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Rev. John G. Fritchey.

was short; but it was characterized by great zeal and fidelity, and was fruitful of good results. His labors were highly appreciated by the people to whom he ministered; and, now that he is gone, his name is still held in grateful remembrance by the members of his flock and others who received from his lips the messages of eternal life and salvation. "The memory of the wicked shall rot; but the righteous are kept in everlasting remembrance."

## REV. HERMAN GERHARD IBBEKEN.

1801 — 1844.

REV. HERMAN GERHARD IBBEKEN was born at Rasteder, in the grand-duchy of Oldenburg, in Germany, on the 25th of January, in the year of our Lord 1801. His studies preparatory to the holy ministry were prosecuted at the Gymnasium in Oldenburg. He then repaired to Giessen, where he spent half a year in the further prosecution of his studies, and then entered upon the study of theology at Halle in 1822, where he remained till 1825.

Having a desire to serve the Church and his Master in the New World, he embarked for the United States in the spring of 1830. At the meeting of Synod which was held in Hagerstown, September, 1830, an application was made to have him received as a member; but for some reason he was prevented from meeting with Synod. A committee was, however, appointed to examine him in Baltimore, and, if he should be approved, license him, and direct him to the care of any Classis from within whose bounds he might receive a call. His examination was satisfactory, and he was accordingly licensed to preach the gospel in October, 1830, and subsequently ordained.<sup>1</sup>

We find in the report of the Board of Missions

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<sup>1</sup>Syn. Min., 1830, pp. 15, 16; and 1831, p. 9.



for 1831, that they had appointed Mr. Ibbeken for two months to visit destitute congregations in the western and northwestern counties of Pennsylvania, with permission, after his time had expired, to locate himself in some field that he might find needing his labors. He, however, declined this appointment. Some time in the same year, however, he visited Somerset County, Pa., and located himself in those congregations in which he remained up to the time of his death, a period of about thirteen years.

His field in Somerset County was large and laborious. In his first report, in 1831, we find that he served the congregations of Somerset, Gebhard's, and Michael's, in Somerset County; Woodcock Valley, in Bedford County; and congregations in Erie and Crawford counties. He then gradually confined his labors to Somerset County; and reports himself, in the following year, as pastor of Somerset, Samuel's, Gideon's, Rhoad's, Peace, Zion, and Southampton, all in Somerset County. This seems to have been pretty much his field up to the time of his death.

Mr. Ibbeken was sick but fourteen days. He died on the 8th of February, 1844, aged 43 years and 13 days. On the 10th, his remains were interred in the graveyard in Somerset,—a large multitude of people being assembled to join in showing this honor to the dead.

“There is a calm, a sweet repose,  
For those who die in Jesus blest;  
They sweetly sleep, secure from foes,  
And on the Saviour's bosom rest.”

REV. FREDERICK AUG. RAUCH, PH.D.<sup>1</sup>

1806 — 1841.

IN trying to get up a suitable Memoir of Dr. Rauch, we are at once met by two very serious obstacles, — the one having reference to the subject of the sketch, the other to the persons for whom the Memoir is designed. The significance of his life, for the Reformed Church in this country, lay chiefly in his superior natural capacities and thorough intellectual training. To treat these in a popular way, and yet do them full justice, is truly a most difficult task. Who, for instance, can, at this date, reproduce fully and adequately represent in words such a character as that of the first President of Marshall College? His towering intellect and native genius, as well as his profound scholarship and extensive learning, render it next to impossible for an ordinary mind even to appreciate, in any suitable measure, much more still to reproduce and paint in vivid and striking forms and appropriate colors, the man who is the subject and possessor of these extraordinary endowments. And when to this first and more immediate difficulty we add the necessity of bringing within the reach and comprehension of ordinary readers so extraordinary

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by the Editor.

a character as that of Dr. Rauch, we immensely increase the difficulties which beset our way. And yet something of the kind is required by the necessities of the case. The work of the sainted author, which proposes to bring in review before us the "Fathers of the German Reformed Church," would be incomplete without some suitable sketch of the founder of our College, and of its peculiar system of philosophy, to take its place among these life-pictures of the sainted dead — the past workers in the vineyard of the Lord.

Asking, then, the indulgence of our readers, in view of any imperfections which may attach to our efforts, we proceed to the discharge of this the most difficult and delicate of duties.

Frederick August Rauch, a native of Hesse-Darmstadt, in Germany, was born at Kirchbracht, July 27th, 1806.<sup>1</sup> He was early bereft of his best friend and treasure, in the loss of his mother, in infancy. His father, we are told, was a clergyman — the worthy pastor of a Reformed church in the vicinity of Frankfort-on-the-Main. He appears to have been a good man and a faithful pastor. "His son was accustomed to speak of him with reverence and affection, as one who had the interests of religion at heart and watched over the souls committed to his care with greater fidelity than is common in Germany, seriously mindful of the

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<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Nevin's Eulogy. Aside from our own personal recollections, most of the facts of this sketch are taken from this masterly production. Our extracts are indicated by quotation marks.

account to be rendered in the end. The family to which he belonged seems, indeed, to have been characteristically disposed to seriousness and piety."

At the early age of eighteen, he became a student in the University of Marburg; where, in 1827, he took his diploma. The following year he spent at Giessen. After being employed as a teacher for some time in the family of an uncle, in Frankfort, he spent another year, as a student, in the University of Heidelberg. Here his youthful and ardent spirit received its first decided direction, in "coming under the influence of that distinguished philosopher and theologian, Charles Daub," — an event which laid the foundation of his future eminence, and qualified him for the important part which he was to play in the history of the Reformed Church in the New World.

"Dr. Rauch always cherished the highest veneration for this great man; looking upon him as the first theologian, and one of the most exalted spirits in Germany and the age to which he belonged. The year spent at Heidelberg, under the light of his instruction, and in contact with the living power of his spirit, was looked back upon with fond recollection as the most interesting and important in the history of his own education." That such a master-mind should exert a mighty influence on a youth so ardent, so talented, and so deeply in love with philosophical pursuits as Dr. Rauch was, is not at all strange. Any man, with even ordinary talents and industry sufficient to keep him alive to what was going on around him, would have been more

or less decidedly impressed and moulded by the overpowering genius of a Daub. He appears, according to the representations of competent witnesses, to have been altogether an extraordinary character. From the author already quoted, we transcribe the following interesting passage: "Knowledge with him — Daub — was not only deep, but full of life. In his person, the most profound speculations became instinct with living breath, and assumed the freshness of actual concrete existence. In the lecture-room he seemed to be perfectly pervaded with his subject; so that it uttered itself in every look and tone and gesture. And yet there was nothing rhetorical or declamatory at all in the representation. Thoughts became objective in his person. The whole man wrought in sympathy with his theme, no matter how abstract, and the idea of self appeared to fall out of view completely. Not unfrequently he would step down from his desk altogether, as though it were too narrow for his feelings, uttering himself in tones of earnestness that would sometimes thrill his auditors with a sensation of awe, as being scarce earthly in their character. Such was he in his lecture-room. Where the student stood near to him, in the intimacies of private life, he felt more fully still under the same plastic influence. The sphere in which his spirit moved habitually was full of light and power. One could wish, indeed, that it had been pervaded by more of the positive element of holiness, such as breathes the atmosphere of heaven, in thoughts and desires flowing actively out towards

Christ. But it is difficult to estimate fairly, in our circumstances, the religious character of one whose position was so wholly different from our own. Standing where he did, Daub's person may well seem to be encircled with a divine light, as it regards religion. It is not indeed such a halo of glory as surrounds the memory of Leighton. But still, it is entitled to deep veneration. He was a man who lived for the invisible and the eternal, and on whose soul the visions of the Almighty, in the person of Jesus Christ, had unfolded their glory."

This beautiful passage is well worthy of being transcribed for its own sake, as setting in proper light one of the most eminent and extraordinary characters of the age in which he lived; but it is still more deserving of a place just here, because of the light it throws upon the character, intellectual and moral, of Dr. Rauch. It solves many questions connected with the brilliant career of him whose memory we desire, above all things, to cherish and perpetuate. One who sat under the instructions of such a master, and enjoyed the benefit of his earnest and pious labors, could not well be himself otherwise than earnest and devoted in his high and responsible calling. The moulding influence of such a master-spirit on a talented and earnest young man cannot well be too highly estimated. And those who enjoyed the privilege of sitting under the instructions of Dr. Rauch in the halls of old "Marshall," know how strikingly the earnest and mighty spirit of the master in Europe was

reflected in the enthusiasm and fire of the pupil, now in the professorial chair. As an earnest and interesting teacher, Dr. Rauch had few equals and no superiors.

The native vigor of the pupil's mind appears also to have been duly recognized and appreciated by the distinguished professor. He showed him many marks of respect. And the pupil seems equally to have appreciated the ability of his teacher. It was this fact which brought him so effectually under the influence of the great and good man. "Dr. Rauch was fitted, in his whole nature, to receive a deep and lasting impression from the spirit of such a man." So says our admiring eulogist; and then brings into view also the other side of the beautiful picture. "It speaks much for the character of Dr. Rauch that such a man as Daub should have honored him, as he seems to have done, with his special notice and regard. He admitted him to the most free and familiar intercourse, and appears evidently to have looked upon him as a young man of more than ordinary capacity and promise. He fixed his eye upon him as one among others who might be relied upon, for promoting sound views in philosophy, according to the system which he held himself; and looked forward with satisfaction, under this view, to the prospect of his being established as a regular university professor in his native land."

These expectations of the teacher were fully realized. Already in his twenty-fourth year he was made a professor-extraordinary in the University

of Giessen, where formerly he had prosecuted his studies. After spending a year in this position, he had so far established his character as professor, that he received an appointment to a regular or ordinary professorship in the University of Heidelberg.

Dr. Rauch had now attained the highest honor to which a young man could aspire; and his way to preferment was fully open before him. His literary prospects lay before him like a fairy vision; but God had other designs with his servant, and led him in a way wholly different from that which he himself had marked out for the future. Unexpectedly, and in a way as mysterious as it was unexpected, he was compelled to leave his native land and seek a home, and a new theatre of action and usefulness, among strangers in a strange land.

“He came to this country in the fall of 1831, having completed the twenty-fifth year of his age. His first year was spent at Easton, Pa., where he applied himself diligently — and with great success — to the cultivation of the English language. Here he was made to feel the heavy disabilities of a foreigner, whose speech and former education both conspire to isolate his existence in the midst of the community to which he belongs.” It was not long, however, before his prospects began to brighten. Though among entire strangers, he had around him warm and true friends; and his own excellent character and gentlemanly bearing soon drew around him more closely still those earlier friends, and others also, besides.



Under an appointment from the Synod of the German Reformed Church, he went to York,<sup>1</sup> in June, 1832, to take charge of the high-school connected with the theological seminary located in that place. In this position he continued till the fall of 1835; approving himself an able and successful instructor. During his residence in this place he was ordained to the holy ministry. This took place in the autumn of 1832.<sup>2</sup>

“In the year 1833 he became united in marriage with a daughter of the late Loammi Moore, Esq., of Morristown, New Jersey. Of this lady it is sufficient to say, here, that she was worthy, in all respects, to be the wife of such a man. She enjoyed his unbroken, unbounded confidence while he lived; and his image, embalmed in sacred sorrow, may be said to have its best shrine, now, in her widowed heart.”

When the classical school connected with the Theological Seminary was, in 1835, erected into Marshall College, under a charter from the Legislature of Pennsylvania, and removed to Mercersburg, along with the Seminary, Dr. Rauch followed the institution to that place, and became its first president. He meanwhile retained his position as Professor of Biblical Literature in the Seminary. In this important position, so abundant in labor and responsibility, he continued to the time of his death,—which took place in 1841,—faithfully discharging the duties of this twofold office. With what success and universal satisfaction he attended

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<sup>1</sup> Mess., Dec., 1832, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> Syn. Min., 1833, p. 26.

to his arduous duties, every one familiar with the history of our College and Seminary already knows.

Dr. Rauch's death was not altogether unexpected. For some time previous to this sad event, his health had been evidently declining. His nervous system, especially, had become fearfully shattered, and his strength was gradually failing him. In the midst of all his sufferings, however, he continued to prosecute his literary and theological studies. This persistent devotion to his books, in connection with his duties in the College and Seminary, undoubtedly aggravated his disease and hastened his death.

Dr. Rauch's character, both private and public, was unexceptionable. His modest and amiable disposition, — his diffidence even, — and his gentlemanly demeanor, were prominent traits in his character. No one, who ever saw him in the lecture-room or in the pulpit, could fail to observe these peculiarities. The image of the man is indelibly stamped upon our own mind, and the peculiar amiability of his character still lingers like a vision of beauty around our person and memory.

Of Dr. Rauch's literary character, and of his celebrity as an author, it is not our purpose to speak, as it would be impossible for us to do justice to his memory. It is sufficient, for the general reader, to remark, that, both in Europe and in this country, he published works of the very highest literary character. The work best known in this country is his *Psychology*, published shortly before his lamented death. This able and genial production placed Dr. Rauch at once in the very front rank of

modern philosophers. The high encomiums passed upon it in different quarters were richly merited. Its extensive adoption and continued popularity as a text-book in many of the schools and colleges of this country, are conclusive evidence of its high literary and scientific merits. In spite of the foolish prejudices entertained against foreigners, the work soon gained, and has ever since enjoyed, a wide popularity.

This successful literary performance, we are told, was only the beginning of what he had intended to do. In the sphere of morals, especially, had he contemplated extensive researches; and preparations were already made for the publication of a work in this department. On the "Moral Philosophy," we are assured, his heart was especially set. But the Lord permitted him not to carry out his extensive plans and realize his wishes. The purposes of heaven, with regard to him and his services in the church militant, were accomplished; and the same mysterious Providence which separated him from his bright and beautiful visions of future eminence in the fatherland, and led him across the trackless ocean to the shores of this New World, now again blighted his fair prospects of literary eminence and distinction, and led him over, through "the dark shadow and valley of death," to the bright shores of the unseen and eternal world — ever new and ever old.

Dr. Rauch died, after suffering long and severely, on the 2d day of March, in the year 1841, aged 34 years, 7 months, and 6 days.

He was buried at Mercersburg, where he had spent the last years of his life in the active service of the Church and her institutions. An appropriate funeral discourse was delivered on the sad occasion, by his friend and fellow-laborer, the Rev. J. W. Nevin, D. D. Subsequently, in 1859, his remains were removed to Lancaster, Pa., and interred in the public cemetery. A beautiful marble monument, devised and procured by his numerous friends and admirers, has since been erected to his memory in the campus of Franklin and Marshall College. During the late Commencement of the College, June 29th, 1871, the ceremony of unveiling the monument took place, in the presence of an immense concourse of friends of the deceased. On this occasion, a very interesting eulogy on the life and character of the deceased was pronounced by the Rev. E. V. Gerhart, D. D.

Long may this beautiful monument stand here, to call up in the minds of the living the works and virtues of the sainted dead.

The following is a list of Dr. Rauch's principal Works, which we append to this sketch of his life and labors for the benefit of the curious reader.

(Published in Europe.)

1. A Latin Treatise on the Electra of Sophocles.
2. A Latin Treatise entitled "De Resurrectione Mortuorum."
3. A work on the Identity of the Hindoos, Persians, Germans, and Slavonians, demonstrated from their Language, Religion, and Customs.
4. A Dissertation or Commentary on Goethe's Faust.

5. A Letter on the Private Confession of the Catholics, and the Particular Confession of the Lutherans.

6. A Treatise on falling away from one church and passing over into another.

7. A Treatise on the Will of God, as the highest Principle of Morals, or on the Destiny of Man.

8. A Treatise on the Hindoos and Persians.

9. Minor Essays and Sermons.<sup>1</sup>

(Published in America.)

1. Inaugural Address — in German.

2. Psychology, or a View of the Human Soul.

3. The Inner Life: Select Sermons. Edited by the Rev. Dr. E. V. Gerhart.

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<sup>1</sup>Syn. Min., 1832, pp. 31, 32.

## REV. JOHN CARES.

1811 — 1843.

JOHN CARES was born of humble but pious parents, in Turbut Township, Northumberland County, Pa., in September, 1811. Modest, quiet, and thoughtful even as a boy, he was early led by the good Spirit into the ways of piety. His earliest religious impressions seemed to take a permanent form and to remain with him. Under the regular ministrations of his pastor, the Rev. Samuel Gutelius, and afterwards those of Rev. Henry Wagner, by whom he was received into the full communion of the Church, he advanced step by step in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

In early youth he had an inquiring mind and a desire for mental as well as gracious improvement. In 1825, when he was about fourteen years old, there was a discussion going on in the Milton papers between a Unitarian and a Presbyterian clergyman in reference to the doctrine of the Atonement. Young Cares became deeply interested in the controversy, and from it picked up much knowledge of doctrines; and, besides having his mind and heart firmly settled in the truth, was no doubt also much stimulated towards religious inquiry.

From this time on also he was deeply impressed

with the conviction that God had called him to the work of the holy ministry. He accordingly began his preparatory studies, and for this purpose availed himself of the Academy at Milton, then under the care of the Rev. Mr. Kirkpatrick. Boarding at home, for several years he walked a distance of from twelve to fourteen miles daily in going to and returning from the Academy. In the face of poverty he struggled nobly to attain his end, and through industry and self-denial was victorious and successful.

Having made good progress at the Academy, he, in the spring of 1830, entered the Theological Seminary at York, Pa., over which the Rev. Dr. Mayer then presided. Here, as before, he seemed animated with but one purpose, namely, to prepare himself for his great work. He applied himself with great diligence to the acquisition of knowledge, all which he sought to sanctify as it became his, that it might subserve the glory of God and the salvation of men. He was much esteemed by the Professors, and enjoyed the confidence and love of his fellow-students, as well as all who knew him in the community.

The best compliment that could well have been paid his talents and piety by the institution and the community at York, was bestowed on him in the fact that when, in 1832, the congregation in that place became vacant by the resignation of the Rev. Mr. Reily, the choice of a successor fell upon Mr. Cares, who was then still a student, and scarcely twenty-one years of age. True to his character,

and as another evidence of his real worth, he at first shrunk from assuming the responsibilities of being pastor of that large and, in many respects, difficult charge. The location of the literary and theological institutions in the place, the ability of his predecessor, his extreme youth and inexperience, and his well-known modesty and distrust of his own abilities, were well calculated to make him desire, as he said, "to go to a more retired and less prominent field." However, the solicitations of the congregation, and the advice of his brethren in the ministry, at length prevailed with him. In the autumn of 1832, having sustained a highly satisfactory examination, he was licensed at the Synod in Frederick, Md., and shortly afterwards ordained, and installed as the pastor of that congregation.<sup>1</sup> It was his first and his only charge. He loved his people, and they loved him. He received frequent calls to other fields. In 1842, when the Rev. Mr. Pauli resigned his charge of the congregation in Reading, they called Mr. Cares; and as English preaching began to be needed there, and Mr. Cares could preach equally well in both languages, the call was earnestly urged. He, however, felt it his duty to decline this call, as he before had done in regard to others.

In January, 1842, he was attacked by a severe cold, from which he had not sufficiently recovered when a special meeting of Synod took place at Lebanon. Still, in his anxiety to be present, he ventured to go; and those who were present well remember

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<sup>1</sup> Syn. Min., 1832, pp. 19, 23, 38.



that he was in much pain during the greater part of the meeting whilst performing the duties of President. In returning to York, in the severest of weather, his cold increased. Still, on the succeeding Sabbath, he preached to his people; and never perhaps did he feel more anxious to preach the gospel, for in the evening of that day numbers of his hearers were deeply impressed, and began to inquire after the way of life. It was his last sermon, and God seemed to honor it with His special blessing.

The end was near. Naturally of a delicate constitution, his strength soon gave way. A complication of diseases ensued, and a local inflammation brought on his death. Just at the time when he was laid on a bed of sickness, gracious influences were moving in an unusual degree in his congregation. "His spirit went up to heaven, borne along, as it were, by the tears and prayers of a multitude of penitent and new-born souls, who were just beginning to know how much he loved, and how ardently he had prayed for them."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Cares died April 5th, 1843, and was buried on Monday afternoon, April 10th, followed to the grave by a very large procession of mourning friends. "We were permitted," says the editor of the *Messenger*, "to enjoy the melancholy pleasure of following his corpse to the grave; and if ever we saw the sublime effect of moral power manifested, it was on that mournful occasion. Here was the spectacle of an humble, retiring minister of Jesus just

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<sup>1</sup> Weekly Mess., April 19th, 1843. See also April 12th and 26th, and Nov. 15th, 1843.

beginning to be known as to his real ability and worth; and yet by the graces which were wrought in him by God's Spirit, and which modestly shone out to view, he had obtained a hold upon an entire community, such as was scarcely known before. The beautiful and commodious church, now veiled in mourning, could contain but a tithe of the vast concourse who were eager to enter on the occasion of the funeral obsequies; and when the shrouded body of the departed pastor was placed in front of the pulpit, and the mournfully sweet tones of the organ began to steal over the already subdued and sobbing congregation, the deep fountains of feeling could only with difficulty be suppressed."

A funeral sermon was delivered by Rev. Dr. Heiner, of Baltimore, a fellow-student of the departed, in which he gave a judicious and eloquent portraiture of his friend and brother, whom he had long known and loved — characterizing him as having been an able, faithful, laborious, affectionate, and successful minister of the everlasting gospel.<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Mr. Lochman, of the Lutheran Church, followed in a brief and appropriate address in the German language, after which the remains of Mr. Cares were deposited in the graveyard adjoining the church, when the crowd dispersed, each saying in his heart, A good man has gone!

Mr. Cares was gifted with fine natural talents, and these, with all the acquirements which his earnestness and industry had secured, were without reserve consecrated to God in the work of the min-

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<sup>1</sup> See this sermon in the Weekly Mess., April 26th, 1843.

istry. As a preacher, he was clear, logical, compact, calm, earnest, and solemn. His appeals to the heart were peculiarly affectionate, pungent, and overpowering. There was an impressiveness, not only in his thoughts and words, but in his look and manner, which was peculiar to him—a kind of divine and holy fascination which fastened the attention of the hearer, awed his conscience, and carried the spirit away into the awful presence of God. We saw him but once, and by this peculiarity would have noticed him among a hundred. All who have heard him preach have spoken, and do still speak, of this something marked in the man and in his manner. The secret of it is no doubt to be sought in his deep piety. His face shone because he had access to the divine presence as a man to a man. It was as if God said, in his words and looks and life, “He that heareth you, heareth me!”

Soon after he took charge at York he was married to Miss Johnston, an estimable lady of that place, who proved to be a congenial companion; and having aided him in his labors, and shared his joys and sorrows for a brief period, still lives to cherish his memory in affectionate silence. One son with which God blessed the union also survives. May the mantle of his sainted father have fallen upon him!

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!”

## REV. ABRAHAM KELLER.

1810 — 1852.

THE subject of this Memoir was born on the 10th day of August, 1810, in Hanover, York County, Pa.<sup>1</sup> He was the youngest son of Abraham Keller and Barbara, his wife, whose maiden name was Kronemiller. In early infancy he was dedicated to the Lord in holy baptism. Later in life, when he reached the years of maturity, he was carefully instructed in the doctrines of the Reformed Church by Rev. Samuel Gutelius; yet, at first, without realizing fully the importance of catechization. On the day of confirmation, however, returning from church, the Spirit of God wrought powerfully upon his mind and heart, — the solemn charge of St. Peter to Ananias seemed to be addressed to him: "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God;" and sinking under the weight of his guilt, he confessed his sins, earnestly implored and obtained the favor of God, — yea, the *peace* of God, "which passeth all understanding." On Sunday following, he approached the Lord's table for the first time; and his communion with the Father, reconciled through Christ, and brought nigh by the power of the Holy Ghost, was sweet.

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<sup>1</sup> The materials for this sketch were furnished by the Rev. A. A. Keller. — D. Y. H.

Soon after this season of refreshing and joyful experiences, he had a desire to devote himself to the gospel ministry. To such a course his father made objections; and, being as yet a minor, he considered it his duty to yield obedience to the will of his father for the time being.

According to parental direction, he became apprenticed to the hatter trade at Littlestown, Pa., where he labored for three years—to the end of his apprenticeship. He had his daily task assigned, and received extra pay for everything beyond. During all this time his heart was fixed; he kept the ministry steadily in view; and, though circumstances were unfavorable to the cultivation of his mind, he labored the more faithfully with his hands, that he might obtain the necessary means to prosecute, at a future day, his studies with success and non-interruption. Thus, at the end of the stated term of apprenticeship, he had earned the sum of about three hundred dollars,—a noble instance of filial obedience, of industry, and of heroic, self-denying perseverance, well worthy of imitation.

He had now arrived at the age of twenty-one, when he considered himself at liberty, yea rather in duty bound, to obey the call of the Spirit within his own breast. He fully determined, by the grace of God, to devote himself henceforth to the service of his Lord and Master. He came with the first-fruits of his labor in his hands, and willingly offered himself on the altar of the gospel.

His father, however, as it would seem, was still

unwilling to aid him; but the Lord inclined the heart of his brother Jacob favorably towards him; who readily promised to furnish him with means, and gave him all the encouragement in his power, thus strengthening his hands and his heart. This decided the matter. He was now fully prepared to go forward in the good work before him.

About the year 1831, he came to York, Pa., to commence his studies preparatory to the holy ministry. Stimulated by an ardent love for his Saviour's cause and kingdom, he prosecuted his literary and theological studies with more than ordinary application, and, as a natural consequence, his health measurably failed him. For the space of three years, however, he continued his studies under the able tuition of Drs. Mayer and Rauch; when the want of means, as well as the great demand for ministers in the Church, induced him to enter the sacred office.

On the 25th of December, A. D. 1834, he entered the matrimonial state with Miss Anna Mary, daughter of Peter Schultz, who is still fresh in the memory of many as a students' friend at York, and as a devoted and exemplary Christian. About this time he was licensed and ordained to the work of preaching the blessed gospel.

His first year of ministerial labor he spent at Shanesville, Ohio, when he received and accepted a call from Carrollton, where he labored under many trials; dark and heavy clouds passing over him,—his heart was filled with doubts, and his hands became tremulous. He regarded all his past labor as

having been in vain; he had indeed sown the good seed with a liberal hand, and yet, alas! no fruit appeared to gladden his heart.

Whilst thus oppressed and bowed down by the weight of his sorrows,—his state being similar to that of the prophet Elijah when under the juniper-tree in the desert,—an aged woman came to him rejoicing in the God of her salvation, who dated her conversion to a funeral sermon preached by him, whilst yet at Shanesville, on Isaiah lxiv. 6: “We do all fade as a leaf.” Such information had its effect. Little did that aged matron know of the important mission she was serving. All doubts at once vanished from his mind like the mist before the morning sun. To be the instrument of salvation to one single soul was sufficient, in his estimation, infinitely to overbalance all his labors and sorrows — one soul, in his view, was of more value than all the world beside. About this time he was also blessed with a son; but it was only the flower of a day — being immediately transplanted by a careful and kindly hand to the paradise on high — no longer to shed its sweet fragrance to the joy of its parents on earth!

At the termination of six years, he moved to Os-naburg; but still continued to labor in a part of his former field. In his new home he had to experience new trials. Three children more were given him — two sons and a daughter — but only to be snatched away by the cold hand of death in early infancy; and even he himself was laid low by sickness,—so low, indeed, that his friends and phy-

sicians even despaired of his ever being able to preach another sermon. But the Lord thought differently. In a short time he was at his post again, a watchman on the walls of Zion, and labored with more diligence and success than ever before, especially at Millheim and Uniontown—two small villages some twenty miles distant—were his labors blessed. At this place, the opposition which he had to face on the part of the world, was frequently most desperate. At one time, when Revs. Kemmerer and Hess sustained him, five or six armed men met them at the church door, threatening violence in case they should enter; but as there was another door, they got in, and likewise found their way to the door of many an open, honest, and penitent heart.

About the year 1848, he accepted a call from Bucyrus, Crawford County, Ohio, where he spent the remaining four years of his life. Scarcely had he entered upon the duties of this new field when he was called to follow a second daughter—in infancy—to the grave. The hand of affliction was laid heavily upon him; yet he meekly bore all. His language was that of Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Here, likewise, he met with much opposition on the one hand, but with equal success on the other. The congregation at Galion increased largely under his ministrations. East of Bucyrus he also succeeded in gathering an entirely new congregation, in the course of a few years, which was of an in-



teresting and promising character. But in the midst of his labors the Lord was pleased to remove him.

In the fall of 1852, that awful scourge, the cholera, made its appearance at Bucyrus, and among the first victims was another of his daughters, who died only a few hours after being attacked; when he expressed the opinion that he himself would soon follow; and, behold, five days after, he took the same disease, about noon, and died in the evening of the same day; and on the following morning, his only surviving daughter died of the same terrible disease,—leaving but one son, of a numerous family, and a widow, “that is a widow indeed.”

During his sickness he was composed in mind, and entirely resigned to the will of the Lord. His grave is in the cemetery, west of Bucyrus, under a large oak. On his tombstone is inscribed the appropriate passage:

“It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like him.” 1 John iii. 2.

Brother Keller was an earnest and affectionate preacher, true to his high and holy calling, being “instant in season and out of season.” He labored hard and faithfully while here; and, when called away, he gave assurance that, as a faithful servant, though absent from the body, he would be “ever with the Lord.”

## REV. JOHN REINECKE.

1789 — 1859.

JOHN REINECKE, the subject of this sketch,<sup>1</sup> was born August 11th, 1789, in Helmarshausen, Electorate of Hessen, Germany. His parents were in humble circumstances, but honest, and living in all things in the fear of God. Being members of the Reformed Church, their son was also educated in the faith and practice of the same confession. Accordingly, at her hands he received baptism, and at her altar he was confirmed and received the Lord's Supper. Nor were the teachings and training of his home and Church without effect; for they kept his conscience pure and tender, to warn and guard him against sin and wrong, and led him in his earliest youth already to commune with God in prayer.

It seems that he was early left fatherless, and it therefore became necessary that he should assist in supporting a widowed mother, and a number of smaller children. He was accordingly apprenticed to learn the trade of tailor. After having served his apprenticeship, he travelled as journeyman over a large part of Germany, and worked at his trade

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<sup>1</sup>This Memoir was prepared at our special request by the Rev. E. W. Reinecke.—D. Y. H.

in many of its leading cities. This gave him an opportunity to become acquainted with men and manners, and to store his mind with a large share of experience and observation. And wherever he sojourned during his wanderings, he always sought the fellowship of those who were earnest and zealous in the practice of religion.

During his childhood, European society had been convulsed by the throes of the French Revolution; and, now that he had reached his earliest manhood, the foot of the oppressor was crushing the liberties and independence of the nations of Europe. His own fatherland had been crushed, and he was conscripted into the armies of the conqueror. Under him he served in various campaigns, took part in different battles, and was, with his regiment, promoted to the Imperial Guard of Napoleon, for prompt and gallant action in saving the ammunition-train during a fire which occurred in a city in which they happened to be quartered. He was also with his regiment upon the march to Russia, but was ordered back before he had reached the fatal plains. But the conviction which he had always entertained, that the cause of Prussia was the cause of the liberties of his fatherland, becoming ever riper, he afterwards embraced the first opportunity of passing over to the armies of the patriots.

After peace had been restored, he returned to his native town, was married to Miss Fredericka Schaeffer, the daughter of his former master, and commenced business for himself at his trade. In this he was reasonably successful, and so was able

to gain for his family a comfortable subsistence. But he had long entertained the idea of emigrating to America. His father had been there before him, and had brought back with him glowing accounts of the country and its people. Many acquaintances also had emigrated, and repeatedly urged him by letters to follow them. His purpose became mature in 1834. He accordingly embarked with his family for the New World, where he safely arrived in August of the same year, and settled in Frederick, Md.

His purpose here was to secure a living for himself and family by working at his trade. But it had been his custom in the fatherland already to gather around him, from week to week, those who were disposed to lead a serious and pious life. At these meetings, a sermon or a portion of the Scriptures was read, a hymn sung, and a simple prayer offered; sometimes, also, a free conversation merely was held about the practical duties and requirements of the Christian religion. The meetings were in no sense schismatic; did not originate in disaffection to the Church or want of faith in her sacraments or ordinances. Those who attended them were faithful sons of the Reformed Church, and diligent in their attendance upon the stated services of the sanctuary. But they missed, in the demoralized state of the Church at that period, one thing which had become a necessity to their hearts. This was "Christ and him crucified," the preaching of whom had been supplanted by the moral platitudes of rationalism. They had only one way left, to

supply themselves privately, as best they could, with that which the regular clergy withheld from them. And yet he clearly saw, and subsequently often spoke of, the dangers to which such meetings, irregular at best, exposed those who frequented them.

In his new home, also, he was soon led into such social religious gatherings,—here, however, under the guidance of a regular minister, the Rev. Dr. F. Schaeffer, at that time pastor of the Lutheran congregation of the place. For as the pastor of the Reformed church at the time could not speak the German language, all those Germans of the Reformed confession who loved the Church and religion, were compelled to seek a spiritual home, temporarily at least, elsewhere. Pastor Schaeffer, having become acquainted with him, suggested to him the propriety of preparing himself for the ministry of the gospel, by a private course of theological study, and offered to him the facilities of his library and direction. After hesitating long, he at length consented, and devoted several years to theological reading and study. It had been Dr. Schaeffer's purpose to prepare him to act as a missionary among the Germans; which his early death prevented him, however, from consummating. About this time Dr. Zacharias took charge of the Reformed congregation of Frederick, and introduced German services in his church. He soon won the confidence and love of the Germans, and brought all those of the Reformed confession back to the spiritual home of their fathers. Dr. Zach-

rias, having become acquainted with the subject of our sketch, also took a great interest in him, and urged him to continue in the course commenced. By him he was directed to apply to the Classis of Zion for licensure, which was granted at its annual meeting in 1837.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after he had been licensed to preach the gospel, he received and accepted a call from the Shrewsbury charge, in York County, Pa., in which he continued to labor up to about two years before his death, when increasing bodily infirmities warned him to desist. This charge consisted at that time of eight congregations, scattered widely over the southern part of the country. The country was hilly, rough, and difficult to travel. The congregations themselves were broken down, and reduced to a mere shadow; his yearly income a mere pittance. These difficulties did not deter him, and for some sixteen or eighteen years he labored patiently in the charge, subject to severe self-denial, and enduring great hardships. Nor were his labors lost. Although they were not accompanied with startling manifestations and large accessions of numbers, yet the religious life of his people was certainly much improved. His congregations also slowly increased in numbers, and, what is better, in confidence. His own call to his charge was made in the sense of a last despairing effort: the call to his successor was a matter of course.

For several years before his death he suffered from a lingering and sometimes painful disease,

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<sup>1</sup>Syn. Min., 1837, p. 12.—D. Y. H.

the consequence of the great hardships and exposure which he endured in his charge. During all this time his constant companion was the Bible, next to which he loved to read about the fortunes of the kingdom of God in past ages. He died April 15th, 1859, aged 69 years, 8 months, and 4 days, and was buried on Palm Sunday, in the burial-ground of the Shrewsbury church, by the side of his wife, who had departed to her home several years before him. His last words were: "Now I have overcome."

As seen from the sketch, the scholastic education of Rev. Reinecke was limited to that which might be acquired in a parochial school of no very high grade. This defect, however, was to a large extent made good by a naturally clear and strong mind, by much reading and thought, and by coming much in contact with men. In his native country, he had been on intimate terms with the professional men of his own and neighboring towns, who had enjoyed the highest university education. They were pleased to resort to his house, and discuss with the humble tailor the abstrusest questions concerning God and Christ, concerning man and salvation. And he was successful, too, in restoring some of them to faith in Christ as the Son of God.

His religious life seemed to be altogether healthy in its tone, and remote alike from a lifeless formalism on the one side, and vaporous enthusiasm on the other. Its central fact was Christ, the Son of God, slain for our sins. He had a lively and abiding faith in the Church and her saving ordinances. Even before the liturgical movement in the Re-

formed Church, he often lamented her want of a liturgy. On the other hand, he always insisted on a pious and godly life, and ceased not to exhort his members to show their faith in deeds of love. His sermons, though not learned or ornate, were faithful, affectionate, and warm, and directed to lead his hearers to imitate the life of Christ their Saviour. He delighted in prayer; and those who heard him, will well remember the childlike simplicity and unshaken trust with which he was wont to address God, his Father in heaven. It was his constant resort in every perplexity and trial, feeling perfectly assured that his prayer would be answered. May we not hope that his ministerial life, though humble and spent "in a corner," was nevertheless not in vain; and that "although dead, he yet speaketh."



## REV. ADAM STUMP.

1816 — 1856.

ADAM STUMP was born near Richville, Stark County, Ohio, March 27th, 1816. He was the son of Frederick and Margaret Stump, who early consecrated him to God in holy baptism; and had the pleasure of seeing no less than three of their sons active and devoted ministers of the gospel. His parents were honest, laborious Pennsylvania Germans, who at an early day removed to the West to procure a comfortable home for themselves and children. The early part of his life was spent on the farm. At a suitable age he was catechized, and afterwards received into the Church, by the solemn rite of confirmation, by the Rev. Benjamin Faust, of Canton, Ohio. He was subsequently impressed with the duty of devoting himself to the gospel ministry, and after pursuing his studies for a while privately, he placed himself under the care of Rev. Dr. Büttner, with whom he remained about one year. Not succeeding in his studies as he desired, under the instruction of his preceptor, who was preaching German, he returned home, and prosecuted his studies under the direction of his pastor, Rev. George Schlosser. He was licensed and ordained to the gospel ministry in the spring of 1840,

and took charge of the scattered members of the German Reformed Church in and around Reedsburg, Wayne County, Ohio.

He was married to Miss Catharine Kindig, of Bethlehem, Stark County, Ohio, on the 24th of September, 1839, who proved to him a useful and agreeable companion, ever ready to sympathize with him in his joys and sorrows. They lived together in the enjoyment of much domestic happiness, their home being the abode of love, piety, and prayer. Having spent what little means he had in his preparation for the ministry, he was necessitated, in entering upon the Reedsburg charge, which was weak and much scattered, to exercise great economy and self-denial, in which situation his wife proved herself a true *help-meet* to him. At first, his prospects seemed dark and gloomy. Dead formalism prevailed to a great extent. Much opposition was excited for a time, which, however, at length gave way, after which he labored with acceptance and success. The charge became strengthened by numerous accessions, and was greatly improved in a spiritual point of view. The family altar was erected in many houses where the voice of prayer had not been heard. He continued his labors here about five years, when he received and accepted a call from the Carrollton charge, which he served with fidelity about six years. His labors here were blessed with the same success that attended them in his first charge.

He next removed to Shelby, Richland County, Ohio, having accepted of a call to the Rome charge.

His health had now become very feeble by his excessive labor. He had several times to suspend the active duties of the ministry for a season, to recruit his shattered frame. Finding the charge too extensive and laborious for his strength he resigned it, and removed to Port Jefferson, Shelby County, Ohio, having received a call to several congregations in that vicinity. Such, however, was his desire to do good and be useful in building up the Church, that he soon extended the field of his labor, and had as much to do as ever. The charge was greatly strengthened by numerous accessions from the world. In the midst of encouraging prospects of future usefulness, he was prostrated by a long and severe attack of typhoid fever. For some eight weeks he was unable to preach. His system received a severe shock. By care and attention he was, however, at length able to resume his labors, with much effort on his part; but was soon taken with a relapse, and died October 2d, 1856, aged 40 years, 6 months, and 5 days. He left five children and a disconsolate widow to mourn his death.

A despatch was sent to the Rev. G. W. Willard, of Dayton, Ohio, who had been with him a few weeks previous at the consecration of a new church in his charge, to attend his burial; but being absent at the time, the funeral services were deferred until the 4th of December, when the occasion was improved by him with a sermon on the words, "And Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah." 1 Sam. xxv. 1.

Rev. Adam Stump, although not distinguished for any great literary or theological attainments, was nevertheless an acceptable and faithful preacher. He was generally successful in engaging the attention of his hearers, and seldom failed to produce some good impressions. He was familiar and easy of access, and in this way gained the affection and confidence of his people.

He was an active and energetic man; and although feeble in health, he performed an astonishing amount of labor. He would sometimes, in protracted efforts, preach regularly for several weeks in succession, when he failed to procure help. It was doubtless in this way that he prostrated his weak and feeble constitution.

He was also strongly attached to the Church of his choice. No sacrifices were too great to advance her interests. Only a few weeks before his death, he accepted of a commission from the Board of Missions to spend some six weeks in exploring certain counties in Iowa, with a view of preparing the way for the settlement of ministers in that inviting portion of the West.

He was an earnest and practical preacher. All were made to feel that he was sincere in what he said, and that he believed and practised what he preached. He had also much of that wisdom which is necessary to win souls for Christ.

But what is the best of all, he was a sincere Christian. It was no uncommon thing to hear persons in and out of the Church say, "Mr. Stump is a good man." This gave great effect to his preaching.

Having lived the life of a devoted Christian and a servant of God, his end was calm and peaceful. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." It was with difficulty that he could speak when near his end. Hence he said but little; but was patient and resigned to the will of God to the last.

He was buried about a mile and a half from Port Jefferson, in the graveyard of what is commonly called "Staley's church." Peace be to his ashes!

The Miami Classis, of which he was a member, took suitable notice of his death, expressing in several resolutions the esteem in which he was held by his brethren. But the record in which he now rejoices is on high; and while it is pleasant to us to witness on earth the testimonials of his zeal and piety, it is to him worth more than all the honors earth can bestow that his name is written in the "book of Life."

## REV. SOLOMON S. MIDDLEKAUFF.

1818 — 1845.

SHORT are the annals of this excellent and amiable servant of Jesus Christ. Brief was his stay on earth, and very brief the term of his ministry; yet he has left a record in the hearts of many.

Mr. Middlekauff was born in the year 1818, near Hagerstown, Md., where also he spent his early life. In his youth he became a member of the Church, and surrendered himself with decided and earnest devotion to the service of his Saviour. Soon after he had united with the Church, he felt it his duty to devote himself to the work of the holy ministry. He accordingly began his preparatory studies in Marshall College, at Mercersburg, Pa., where he graduated with the class of 1839. He studied theology in the Seminary at the same place; and, having completed the prescribed course of study, he was examined and licensed by the Classis of Mercersburg. He soon after received a call to become pastor of the Lincolnton charge in North Carolina, which he accepted. He immediately went South, and in August, 1842, he was ordained to the holy office by the Classis of North Carolina, and installed as pastor of the Lincolnton charge.<sup>1</sup> Here he con-

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<sup>1</sup> Syn. Min., 1843, p. 30.

tinued an efficient and successful laborer for the space of about three years, when God called him into the Church above. He died at the Mineral Springs, Catawba County, N. C., on the 21st of May, 1845, in the 27th year of his age.

His sickness being consumption, was somewhat protracted. He had the full possession of his mental faculties to the end; and in the full consciousness of approaching death, he was sustained and cheered by the faith which he had preached to others. Though he was bound to earth by the affections of a youthful wife and by an interesting charge, in the spiritual interests of which he felt the deepest concern, yet he willingly left all in obedience to his Master's will.

He was a man of mild and peaceful spirit, and enjoyed in an eminent degree the confidence and love of his people. When his remains were brought home to be interred in the midst of his people, the large concourse that gathered weeping around his grave bore testimony to his faithfulness to them and of their love to him. He was much esteemed by the ministers of the Classis among whom he spent his brief ministerial life; and there are many throughout the Church who cherish with faithfulness and affection the memory of his short but beautiful life. The young, too, are needed in the choir above, and it is not for us to find fault with that mercy which glorifies those whom it will in early life.

## REV. JACOB B. SHADE.

1817 — 1846.

JACOB B. SHADE was born in Upper Providence Township, Montgomery County, Pa., April 25th, 1817. His father, Henry Shade, was a shoemaker, by which trade he supported his family. His mother was an industrious woman. Both parents were members of the Church, and, though poor, were honest and frugal, and in the course of time got in possession of a small farm, on which they resided and raised a family of seven children. Jacob B. was the fifth child. He lived with his parents till he was ten years of age, after which he spent three years with his grandfather, during which time he got to be a wicked boy. At the age of thirteen he was brought home again, where, by the pious care of his parents, he was redeemed from some of his evil habits. When he was seventeen years of age his parents sent him to catechetical instruction, after which he was confirmed, and admitted to the Lord's Supper. He now lived a regular, and, as he thought, a Christian life. About two years later, during a season of religious meetings, he was awakened to deeper earnestness, in which state of penitent concern he continued till in his twenty-first year, when he professed to have given himself



wholly to Christ, and was blessed with a sense of His favor in a degree he had not enjoyed before. He was now very diligent in the use of all the means of grace, and zealous for the promotion of his Saviour's glory in the salvation of sinners.

In the spring of 1838, when he was about twenty-one years of age, he commenced a prayer-meeting at his father's house, on the Friday evening of each week, which was kept up during the summer. In the autumn he began to exhort at these meetings, which were now moved from house to house in the neighborhood, among such families as were open for them.

Hitherto Mr. Shade, having learned his father's trade, wrought at that business. About this time, however, he began to find his heart inclined towards the holy ministry, and felt himself encouraged in this direction by being spoken to on the subject by his pastor. The inability of his father to support him in his preparatory studies seemed to have been the chief obstacle in his way; but having been informed that the Church, through her Board of Education, was ready to help such as were needy, he at once embraced the proffered help and hope, and was ready to leave for Mercersburg, May 20th, 1839. Before his departure, he wrote a hymn of eight stanzas, of which the following is the third:

Because I freely did receive  
The grace which God alone can give,  
I feel that I must go  
And tell poor souls, condemned to die,  
That Jesus brought salvation nigh,  
Before they sink to woe.

He says in his journal: "I have now given myself up to the service of God, and I humbly put my trust in Him. I do not expect to gain either riches or honor in this world, but I am willing to spend and be spent in the cause of my blessed Lord and Master, and for immortal souls; I am willing, by the help of God, just to be or to do what is pleasing in His sight."

His student life was truly earnest; and did space allow us to picture it in full and at length, it would present much worthy of imitation by young men. Being limited in means, he exercised the most astonishing self-denial in order to keep himself at college. After he was at Mercersburg a few weeks, he found that paying for regular boarding was beyond his means, and he accordingly began to board himself. "I now board myself," he says in his journal. "My meat and drink are bread, molasses, and water. This I can get for 75 cents a week." His boarding during the first session, from May 20th to September 25th, cost him only \$15! Finding this kind of food too scanty for him, he added, the following session, butter, and sometimes eggs. Then his boarding expenses from November 5th to April 1st, five months, were as follows: Bread, \$10.50; butter, \$2.50; eggs, 25 cts.; potatoes, 75 cts.—in all, \$14.00! And yet, during the same term, he gave to benevolent purposes \$3. The third, fourth, fifth, and sixth sessions his boarding amounted to about the same. After this he boarded some with the steward; but still at intervals boarded himself.

He visited his home near the Trappe nearly every

vacation. At the close of the first session he started home on foot with \$3 in his pocket, walked nearly all the way, and had fifty cents left when he arrived at home. On his return, he walked one day thirty-eight miles. He made the greatest part of the way on foot home and back on subsequent occasions when he visited home. Here is earnestness. Here is self-denial. Here is perseverance. How many young men make poverty an excuse for not preparing themselves for the ministry. Before such a spirit as that manifested by young Mr. Shade, all poverty is a powerless obstacle. "Where there is a will there is a way." Should such a young man read this sketch, let him be encouraged by the example to go forward.

Mr. Shade often refers to his health, which was good all the time; and he believed it to be the better for the plain food on which he subsisted. Of this there can be no doubt. At the beginning of the second session he records a very excellent rule for himself, as follows: "I will during the coming session, and during my life, make it my business, first, to take care of my soul; secondly, to take care of my body; thirdly, to take care of my studies, or whatever I may be engaged in during my life."

Mr. Shade did not take a full course in college. He entered the Theological Seminary in the autumn in 1841. From this time forward he was much afflicted with ill-health. He says the whole five months preceding August, 1842, was a season of uninterrupted pain. At this time he was called home to follow his mother to the grave. On his

return to Mercersburg, a distance of 150 miles, part of which he made as usual on foot, he caught a severe cold, which settled upon the vital organs of his system, and became a source of the most excruciating pain. He describes at length his sufferings of body and mind, which it is distressing to read.

The death of his mother affected him deeply. For the encouragement of pious mothers, we record his reflections on this sad occasion. "My mother was very dear to my heart; and besides breaking the cords of affection, which was painful in the extreme, her death has robbed me of many comforts which her kind hands used to minister to my wants. My heart seemed as if it would break, when I thought that she had gone never to return to us again in this valley of tears. I shall never forget the short season which I spent one Sabbath standing by her grave, looking steadfastly on the little hillock under which lay entombed the lifeless body of my dearest friend upon earth. I felt that I was bereaved indeed. There I thought of my infancy, when her constant care was exercised in my behalf by day and by night; and of the scenes of my childhood, when her watchful eye guarded my heedless steps and preserved me from unconscious danger. There I thought of her affectionate admonitions and counsels in youth, of her sorrows and troubles caused by us, and of her severe toils, labors, and pains, to provide us with the comforts of life, and to make us happy. There, too, I thought of her instructions and her prayers; and there, I trust, I thanked the Lord that he had given me such a mother!"

Mothers, especially pious mothers, shall be remembered. Amid their discouragements, their hearts often sink and are sad; but what they sow in tears will be reaped in joy, though it may be only over their graves!

While in the Seminary, he frequently visited the valleys west of Mercersburg, preaching for the people, establishing and conducting Sabbath-schools, and catechizing the young. In this work he was assisted by other students. His labors were greatly blessed.

On the 23d of May, 1843, he was licensed by the Mercersburg Classis; and on the 11th of June following he was ordained in Mercersburg as a missionary among the mountains, where he had previously labored as a student. He entered upon his work with great earnestness; and, having before laid the foundations, his work was now fully to organize his field and carry forward what had been so well begun. His field became the McConnellsburg charge, consisting of four congregations, viz., McConnellsburg, Hebron, Nazareth, and Centre. All these, except the first, were organized by him in the year 1843. He labored with much acceptance. "The people of the whole charge speak of him in terms of the highest praise."

The period of his labor in this charge after his ordination was short. Having been urged to enter upon the colporteur work, under the auspices of the American Tract Society, he felt it his duty to comply. In this he was sincere, though we may question the wisdom of his decision. He left his charge, amid

the deepest regrets of his people, September 20th, 1843. He now spent one year in Berks County, Pa., as a colporteur. "Here," says one, "he labored even harder than before. He exerted himself beyond his strength, and laid the foundation of the disease—consumption—which has taken him away." The following year, directed to the field by considerations of health, he spent as a colporteur in Alabama. He returned from the South in May, 1845, apparently, but not permanently, improved in health. He was now mostly at home, slowly but surely declining. Some weeks before his death, his physicians told him his end was nigh. It did not disturb him, for he was prepared to go. On the day of his death, January 6th, 1846, Rev. Mr. Kooker had just left his bedside, when he arose from his bed and sat in his chair by the stove. As one overcome with sleep after toil, his head nodded—he fell asleep, and was at rest forever! There was nothing brilliant or rapturous about his death. He sunk as the sun amid the summer evening's golden calm.

He lies buried in the graveyard of the German Reformed church at the Trappe. The modest marble slab which marks his grave bears this memorial:

In  
Memory of  
REV. JACOB B. SHADE,  
Born April 25th, A. D. 1817,  
And departed this life  
January 6th, A. D. 1846,  
Aged 28 years, 8 months, and 11 days.

This sketch will itself characterize the man, so that it is not necessary to enlarge. Having been a fellow-student, we remember him well. In person, he was slim and straight; in appearance, calm, easy, self-possessed, and solemn. His piety was unfeigned. If it lacked in anything — and whose piety is so full-orbed and symmetrical that it lacks in nothing? — it was, at least in the early period of his student-life, in evangelical freedom and cheerful, social elasticity. Stern and severe in reference to himself, he laid the same measure on others. Much of the language in his journal, in regard to the piety of students and professors, he would no doubt later have himself condemned as censorious and uncharitable. This feature of defect in his piety is, however, not to be blamed on him, but upon that system and type of religion under which his early spiritual life was cultivated. He was largely entangled in the spirit of that system commonly called “New Measures,” which, though wholly foreign to the Reformed Church, had at that time introduced itself at various points in her bosom, and which found it so hard to tolerate any piety which was not after its own type. The Tract Society spoke to him of the “German districts of Pennsylvania, where a cold, formal faith had reigned for a century, with little of the power of godliness.” And he too readily believed this foreign slander against his own spiritual mother. This spirit gave some of its own color to his entire religious character. Yet deeper and more powerful than this was the main current of

his humble, devoted, and most excellent life. He truly desired and prayed that his life might be hid with Christ in God, and labored with more than ordinary zeal to secure the same blessing to others. By an early death he sooner reached his heavenly home.



## REV. ANDREW S. YOUNG.

1810—1848.

MR. YOUNG was born in Bucks County, Pa., in the year 1810 or '11. The exact date of his birth is not known to us. In May, 1833, he entered the High-School at York, Pa., with the view of preparing himself for the ministry. When, in the fall of 1835, the institution was located at Mercersburg, and chartered by the Legislature as a College, he continued his connection with it, and was a member of the second class, which graduated in 1838. From this time up to the close of the summer session of 1843, he taught in the institution, first as assistant teacher in the Preparatory Department, then as tutor in the College, and subsequently as Rector of the Preparatory Department. In the meantime he prosecuted his theological studies; for a while as a student of the Seminary, and afterwards privately.

In May, 1841, he was united in marriage with Miss Elizabeth A. Moore, daughter of the late Loammi Moore, Esq., of Morristown, N. J.

He was licensed to preach the gospel by the Goshenhoppen Classis in the spring of 1843;<sup>1</sup> and the ensuing autumn he received and accepted a call to the Trappe charge, in Montgomery County; and

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<sup>1</sup> Syn. Min., 1843, p. 30.

was there ordained to the holy ministry by the Classis of Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> Here he labored with much acceptance until the winter of 1844-'45; when, his health failing him, he was induced to resign. After his health was sufficiently restored, he became pastor of the Mount Bethel charge, in Northampton County, Pa., where he continued in the active duties of the ministry till near the close of his life; when, by the advice of his physician, he resigned his charge and removed to Allentown. At this place he and Mrs. Young opened a Female Seminary, with very fair prospects of success; but a disease of the chest, with which he had been afflicted for some time, soon ended his life.

Mr. Young was a man of much modesty, and of an amiable, retiring disposition. His great moral worth was therefore little known beyond the particular sphere in which Providence placed him. Constitutionally averse to all pretension and show, and diffident of his mental powers, he could be rightly appreciated by those only who came in actual contact with him while engaged in the discharge of his duties. He assumed no obligations which he did not seek faithfully to perform, and always professed less than he actually knew.

During his whole collegiate and theological course, he enjoyed the unqualified approbation and warm attachment of his instructors. His patient industry and gentlemanly deportment secured for him the esteem of all his associates. As a teacher, he never failed to command the love and confidence of his

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<sup>1</sup> Syn. Min., 1844, p. 24.

pupils; and by his punctuality and thorough instructions he always reflected honor upon his office.

His talents were good rather than brilliant; his attainments solid rather than striking; hence his scholarship was more profound and real than apparent. He spoke and wrote both the English and German languages with equal accuracy, fluency, and classic elegance; and in this respect was not surpassed, perhaps not equalled, by any graduate of Marshall College; yet he rarely, if ever, spoke in public, or wrote, unless to perform some assigned or official duty.

Mr. Young was one of the excellent of the earth. Both as a man and Christian, he stood high in the estimation of those who knew him. In his ministry he was earnest and faithful, and universally beloved. His best record is the souls he quietly and unostentatiously won for the Divine Master.

Of his last illness and death, we have no definite information; but in view of his character, we may be fully assured that his end was peace. He departed this life February 15th, 1848, in the 37th year of his age, universally beloved.<sup>1</sup>

“Say, why should friendship grieve for those  
Who safe arrive on Canaan’s shore?  
Released from all their hurtful foes,  
They are not lost, but gone before.”

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<sup>1</sup> See Ger. Ref. Mess., Nov. 8, 1848; obituary by Rev. Dr. Gerhart. — D. Y. H.

## REV. FREDERICK R. STUMP.

1814 — 1850.

FREDERICK R. STUMP was born on the 20th day of April, 1814, in Stark County, Ohio.<sup>1</sup> He was baptized in his infancy by the Rev. A. Weid, a Lutheran minister, and at an early age became a member of the German Reformed Church. He was united in marriage with Miss Eliza Bell, of Chambersburg, Pa., on the 6th of September, 1842; after which he returned to the home of his youth, and immediately commenced preparing himself for the gospel ministry. His course of study was short, and his ordination took place the following spring.

With great zeal and a persevering spirit, Mr. Stump commenced his ministerial labors in the Fulton charge. For two years he labored here, with great self-denial and devotedness, in his call-

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Frederick Stump, the father of the subject of this sketch, and also of Revds. Adam and William Stump, survived his son, and was then living in Stark County, Ohio. He was born in Lebanon County, Pa., in the year 1781, and emigrated to the wilds of Stark County in the year 1806. While his frame is feeble, and gray locks deck his temples, his heart is still warm and zealous in the beloved Church to which he gave three sons to labor as ministers in her bosom. The facts in this sketch of the life of Rev. F. R. Stump have been kindly furnished by the Rev. J. McConnell. We have adopted nearly his own language.

ing. Receiving and accepting a call from another field, he removed thence. In this new field he labored with much acceptance and with great success for over two years. His arduous labors having seriously impaired his health, he resolved upon a more southern clime, and accordingly accepted a call from the Union charge, then vacant. His labors in this field were crowned with such abundant success, that Classis shortly afterwards constituted the territory embraced within its limits into two distinct charges. It was in one of these, the Jefferson charge, that, in the midst of great usefulness, and in the prime of life, death suddenly put an end to his labors. Thus, after a term of eight years' hard but very successful service in three different charges, his ministerial career triumphantly closed.

How mysterious are the ways of that Providence which terminates the life and labors of one so young, so beloved, and so faithful! In his childhood and youth, his character was a combination of many excellencies. He was ever obedient and loving towards his parents. His regard for the Sabbath and the sanctuary was strongly marked even in his early days. It is said, that, when invited by other boys to participate in play on the Sabbath, he would rebuke them severely by requesting them to hear him read the New Testament. As a man he was amiable, noble, and generous, — beloved by his family, and highly respected by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance.

His piety was deep-toned, uniform, consistent, and exemplary. Like John, he possessed such an even,

kind, and affectionate disposition, that love appeared to be the leading and governing trait in his life. It made him affable and affectionate in his social intercourse, and warm and ardent in his pulpit ministrations. He was particularly remarkable for his strong faith. The character given of Barnabas might appropriately be applied to him: "He was a good man: full of faith and of the Holy Ghost."

The sufferings which preceded his death were exceedingly severe; but they were all borne with patience and great fortitude. Not a murmur escaped his lips during his illness. He was always cheerful and happy; and why should he not be? His work of preparation was not deferred to a dying bed. All was peace within. When addressed in reference to the things of another world, a heavenly smile would play upon his countenance. His faith in Jesus Christ was always unwavering; but it was in his last moments, as his soul was nearing the eternal world, that Christ manifested to him the greatest display of his glory. The morning on which he died, at dawn of day, he called his weeping family to his bedside, to receive his last advice and dying benediction. The scene was solemn and deeply affecting. He exhorted them to prepare to meet him in heaven. Then, in a distinct and audible voice, he commended them, in one of the most fervent prayers, to Almighty God. His soul now appeared to be cut loose from earth, and its wings were plumed and ready for its happy flight to the bright world above. God drew near, and divine glory seemed to flood his soul. At this time he

was heard to exclaim: "Holy, holy, holy is the Triune God! Why, this room is full of glory. O blessed Jesus! O blessed Jesus! What happiness there is now in my soul!" He said to his brother, the Rev. Wm. Stump: "The angels! the angels! Don't you see the angels? They have come to take me home. I am going. All is well! all is well!" Surely, the end of the upright man is peace! Thus he died, in the triumphs of faith. Death in his case was robbed of its sting, and the grave of its victory; for he fell asleep in Him who has the keys of death and the grave. How near heaven the good man when he dies, and how full of happiness his soul must be, when its departure is so triumphant!

"Servant of God, well done!  
Rest from thy loved employ;  
The battle fought, the victory won,  
Enter thy Master's joy."

Mr. Stump died November 11th, 1850, aged 36 years, 6 months, and 22 days, leaving a pious and affectionate wife, a son, and two little daughters, to mourn their greatest earthly loss. The Jefferson charge lost a faithful pastor, and the Reformed Church one of her most devoted ministers.

"Happy soul, thy days are ended,  
All thy toiling days below;  
Go, by angel bands attended,  
To thy blessed Jesus, go.

"Waiting to receive thy spirit,  
Lo! the Saviour stands above;  
Shows the purchase of his merit,  
Reaches out the crown of love."

## REV. JOEL L. REBER.

1816 — 1856.

JOEL L. REBER, son of Nicholas and Susanna Reber, was born in Heidelberg Township, Berks County, Pa., Nov. 8th, 1816. His father was an honest farmer, without much property. His mother died when he was about six years old. In early youth he possessed an inquiring mind, which manifested itself intellectually in a great fondness for reading, and religiously in habits of piety.

On the first few pages of a diary, which he began in 1845, he has left us a brief account of his life up to that point. In it we have a modest but truthful account of his early longings and struggles, defeats and victories. We cannot better introduce the reader to his short but eventful life, than by a translation of this touching story from the pen of the faithful man who writes no more.

“‘By the grace of God I am what I am.’ This grace wrought at times in me as far back as I can remember. I derived great benefit from the writings of Stilling, and also through catechetical instruction. Only when I was eighteen or twenty years of age, my heart became right firm. Ignorance in reference to the plan of salvation for a long time stood in my way. I was *justified* by faith sev-



eral years before I clearly and certainly knew it. The *love* of God, more than any other motive, drew me to God. I often bathed myself in the ocean of His love. But I had also many seasons of trial to pass through.

“In the winter between 1834 and 1835, I was at school in Chester County, Pa. My principal object in this was to learn English; but God had a deeper end in view in bringing me to this place. Rev. J. C. Guldin preached there with much warmth and effect. I was especially benefited by his manner of teaching and exhortation. Here arose in me first a desire towards the holy ministry. Never can I forget one Sunday when I had been in the church of this excellent man of God, and returned home with streaming eyes. ‘I would rather suffer my blood to flow,’ said he, ‘than to give up this precious truth.’ Such a minister I would also wish to be, thought I; but not one who fails to manifest this spirit and earnestness. The desire to be such a preacher from this time forth much employed my mind, — that God might bless this desire, if so were His will, often enlivened my heart.

“In the spring I returned to my father, in Berks County. Here I remained till the year 1837, when I went to Easton, Northampton County, to learn the trade of a printer, with Joseph P. Hetrick. Here I often lay on my knees before God in secret, praying Him to lead me into the ministry, if the desire had come from Him.

“My going to the printing-business was to a great extent determined by the hope that it would

afford me an opportunity to gather knowledge; and I continued at this business till towards the autumn of 1837, but often felt great uneasiness of mind. *In me* something called, 'Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.' At length I felt myself constrained to write to Rev. John C. Guldin, and lay my heart open to him. His answer was: 'Refuse not: the Lord calls.' It was now also my duty to make the matter known to my dear father. In his answer, he set before me the importance of the ministerial office; but did not decide either for or against my purpose. A second letter from Rev. Guldin induced me to go home to my father. My employer and his dear wife cheerfully gave me permission, after I had revealed to them my state of mind. 'If God has need of you, we may not detain you,' said these dear people. This was in the evening; and the next morning, at four o'clock, I was already on my way home. Never shall I forget this journey. The whole power of hell seemed to be over me. I was exceedingly alarmed and distressed. 'All is deception,' something seemed to whisper in my ear. I could not eat during the whole day. I took sick in my distress. Such temptations I had till I was on the way to Mercersburg, when they left me.

"Now my father was agreed that I should go to Mercersburg in November. I had now only a few weeks' time in which to prepare. All things had already been prepared, when one brother and my father began to oppose the carrying out of my design. Methodist said, 'You must not study—not have recourse to flesh and blood,' etc. A severe

trial for me. But the Lord delivered me from this error. I said, 'I must study, and preach in the German Reformed Church.' How often have I thanked God that in this particular He led me so wisely and so well. It is wicked to make the weak to err, as was intended by this attempt.

"Accordingly, in November, 1837, I went first to Mercersburg; where I continued till August, 1842. I lost, however, about one year of this time on account of feeble health. I injured myself during the first year by too constant application to study; but all this worked for my good. In the last year of my studies, I was called to pass through severe trials. I had, especially, a fierce temptation to encounter. I was compelled to wander wholly in darkness. I was resolved in my mind, did this trial continue two weeks longer, to give up all. I walked about three or four weeks in this fearful night. I often felt as if all was ideal imagination, and nothing real. But the all-merciful God helped me, and overruled all for my good.

"In the winter between 1842 and 1843, I was with Rev. P. S. Fisher, in Centre County: assisted him in his pastoral charge; and, in the spring of 1843, I took charge of some congregations which he resigned, and also of some others besides, and took up my residence in Rebersburg, Brush Valley. Here I remained one year, till I nearly lost my sight through inflammation of my eyes. The Lord was with his suffering servant; and in a revival in the congregation where I resided, over one hundred professed to have found peace with God; of

whom, however, only about two-thirds remained firm in their professions. There was much power there. To God be all the glory. Sect-people persecuted us much — mocked at our assemblies, because we did not, like them, permit all kinds of disorder. I was compelled to resign this charge; and a young brother, Rev. W. R. Yearick, became my successor.

“Now I lived with my dear brother, Rev. Thomas H. Leinbach, in Tulpehocken, where I was medically treated for the cure of my eyes by Dr. Gloninger, of Lebanon. In the spring of 1845, I was again so far restored as to be able to serve a charge; and, having been earnestly solicited, I took charge of several congregations which had till then belonged to the parish of Rev. H. Wagner, of Lebanon, namely, Jonestown and Campbellstown; and with these I was also to preach for Rev. Mr. Leinbach once a month. I removed to Jonestown on the 2d day of July, 1845. May God fulfil his designs in me. Amen.”

Mr. Reber, in this sketch, has omitted to mention the time of his ordination, which took place on the 14th of May, 1843. He was ordained by the Susquehanna Classis.

The brief account of his life which we have given ends with his removal to the Jonestown charge. About this time, he was married to a daughter of the Rev. Thomas H. Leinbach, of Tulpehocken, in whom he found a devoted wife, an earnest co-worker in his labors, and one who shared with great energy and evenness of spirit all his joys and sorrows.

Here he labored, with much self-denial and success, for the space of five or six years. The people of this charge manifested their tender affection and grateful remembrance of his services among them, by holding a public service in the congregation, after they had heard of his death, and putting upon record several resolutions, in which they bear a beautiful and touching testimony to his faithfulness among them as their pastor.

About the year 1851 or '52, he received a call from the Millersville charge, in Lancaster County, embracing the congregations Millersville, Rohrerstown, and Conestoga Centre; residing, the greater part of the time, in the city of Lancaster. Here he labored, much beloved, for several years; when his health had failed to such an extent that he felt himself constrained to resign his charge. With manifest sorrow, and yet with a resignation that had its ground in a deep and well-trying faith, he faced the prospect of having wholly to give up the duties of the ministry, which he so much loved. Still, it pleased God again to improve his health somewhat; and, receiving a call from the Codorus charge, in York County, though feeble in body, he obeyed. In hope he went to become the pastor of that people, but his friends saw plainly that he was going to become a martyr to his labors. With a sad heart we saw him remove from Lancaster; and on that occasion ventured to say to him, that, as his health was so poor, he would be justifiable in ceasing to labor in the ministry. Never shall we forget the firmness, mingled with resignation, with which

he replied: "I intend now to go on till I break down, taking care of myself as much as I can." Thus went this lamb to the offering.

His term of labor here was short—only about nine months. He attended to his ministerial duties up to near the time of his death, but amid much bodily weakness.

On the first day of August, 1856, in the evening, about six o'clock, I rode with my family along the beautiful Susquehanna, between Milton and Lewisburg. It was a calm and lovely evening; and I remember to have remarked, How quiet is the river at our side—not a single wave is stirring, save when the silvery fish rises to take insects that hover over its surface. The red sun was slowly sinking over the White Deer Mountains, and the nearer it reached the summit the more did the sky seem like a "sea of splendor," or like a "prairie on fire." Distinctly do I remember the mutual remarks made on all these things of beauty; and fresh in memory are still the interludes of silent musing that glided between. How naturally, at such an hour and amid such scenes, do our thoughts stray into the infinite, and wander "in the land of the hereafter." At this very hour, as I learned two weeks after, a beloved fellow-laborer "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ," was passing through the gates of death into higher and purer and happier realms.

The Rev. Joel L. Reber died, at the parsonage of the Codorus charge, in York County, Pa., on the 1st of August, 1856, at six o'clock in the even-

ing, aged 39 years, 8 months, and 23 days. His health had been growing feeble for some months, but he was confined to his bed only about two weeks. His sickness was consumption, to which came also dysentery, which speedily ended his mortal life. He was buried on Sabbath, the 3d of August, in the churchyard near his residence. A very solemn and appropriate funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. D. Gring, of Shrewsbury, on Matt. xxv. 23. He was followed by Rev. J. Sechler, of Hanover, who delivered an earnest exhortation to the vast multitude assembled on the solemn occasion to sympathize with the living and to mourn for the dead.

The good people of the Codorus charge, among whom the departed had labored but a short time, had learned warmly to love their pastor, and manifested great kindness towards him and his family during his sickness. "Parents"—so says the letter of a friend—"could hardly have done more during his sickness and burial, than was done by these people for their pastor. The Codorus charge had been for a long time destitute of a pastor; but in Mr. Reber the Lord had sent them a spiritual father. He preached to them Christ and the cross, and they felt and appreciated the power of the gospel and the self-denying services of their faithful pastor and teacher, and consequently deeply felt his loss. This was especially the case with the seventy young persons whom he had instructed as catechumens, and only four weeks before his burial confirmed, and for the first time admitted to the

Supper of the Lord. They followed him with silent tears to the grave, and burst out into loud weeping and lamentation as he sunk from their sight into the silent tomb."

Mr. Reber possessed naturally a very strong and original mind. There was always something fresh in what he spoke and wrote. There are few who excel him in the formation of a skeleton. He constructed his sermons in a way which would always unfold, in an interesting manner, the substance of the text. He had the mind and the taste, though such was the course of his laborious life that he had not always the time, for the deeper inquiries belonging to the divine science. He loved the Church, and unreservedly devoted to her interests in every department a strong mind and a warm and willing heart.

He was a vigorous writer, both in English and in German. He wrote much for the periodicals of the Church, and his articles were always able and to the point. Besides, in 1850, while pastor at Jonestown, he published a small work on the Sect-spirit, which manifests a deep insight into the hidden workings of religious fanaticism. It contains truly "earnest words."<sup>1</sup> Pity that its being in the German language limits its circulation. Nevertheless, it has passed through two editions.

Mr. Reber always took a deep interest in the work of Home Missions. He had a heart to mourn over the desolations of Zion; and he always deeply

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<sup>1</sup> Its title is: "Ein Ernsthaftes Wort über Secten-Geist und das Secten-Wesen. Von Joel L. Reber. Chambersburg, Pa.: M. Kieffer & Co. 1850."



sympathized with feeble charges, weak and destitute congregations, and desolate regions of the Church. He frequently remarked to his intimate friends, that he abidingly felt the solemn pressure of an inward call to labor as a pioneer explorer, to visit members and families of the Church who had emigrated into thinly populated districts, to gather and organize them into congregations, and secure for them the privileges of a stated ministry. He did at one time labor in this way, for several months, in some of the counties on the West and North Branches of the Susquehanna; and, though it was a self-denying work, he delighted in it, and frequently said it was agreeable to his desire and wishes to be so employed in a more permanent way. It seemed as if the Master was constantly saying to him: Go to the lost sheep of the household of faith; and he was always ready, hoping and praying that the Church would assign him such a work. As President of the Board of Home Missions, near the end of his life, he had an opportunity, in a limited way, to gratify his feelings in this kind of labor, and his heart and hands were in the work. But instead of feeling satisfied with writing letters of encouragement to the missionaries, he ever sighed to be a laborer himself in the destitute regions of the Church.

A spirit like that now described is eminently a spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice. These graces Mr. Reber possessed in a marked degree. He sought not his own in the ministry. Ease and earthly advantage were ever with him subordinate

to the great work to which, by a well-considered vow, he had devoted his life.

Those who knew Mr. Reber are well aware that one of the most prominent features in his religious character was *conscientiousness*. Few men sought the path of duty with such care. Few had such a quick perception of right and wrong. The first question with him seemed always to be, What is right? He was also very decided. When he saw the path of duty, he feared not to walk firmly in it. As he conferred not with flesh and blood, so neither did he consult the caprices and prejudices of men. He compromised not the right. He believed that it was always right to do right, and he calmly left the consequences in the hands of that God in whose hands alone are the hearts of men and the issues of life. This feature in his character sometimes brought him into sharp conflict with the darkness of natural men; and there were those in his charges who, loving their lusts more than the truth, cried out after the manner of those of old, to their own shame and to his honor: "We have found this man a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, and a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes." In this lay much of his power. He was felt to be a testimony among his people. His trumpet gave no uncertain sound. Though humble, as those know best who knew him most intimately, he feared not the faces of men; and he ever felt that his weakness was the strength of Christ. There are many witnesses to his faithfulness in his charges. There are those who at first became his enemies because he told them

the truth, who afterwards became his best friends, because they saw that the smitings of the righteous are as an excellent oil.

Mr. Reber was a pungent, searching preacher. His illustrations of truth were striking and convincing, and he brought the truth home to the heart. Seldom was the effect of the truth lost in vague generalities. He adhered closely to the text, and as closely to the circumstances of his hearers. His sermons were not so much on general topics which would suit anywhere, as on particular points suited to the time, place, and people. Though not a fluent speaker, he always interested by his clear, rich, and well-arranged matter. His sermons were not so much to please the ear as to impress the heart. He did not so much sow flowers of beauty as shoot arrows of conviction. His sermons were remembered. They lingered not in the memory as a lovely song when one has played well upon an instrument, but they wrought in the heart as the power of the world to come.

He was always earnest in his preaching. Even in the calm evening of his life, when his bodily strength had given way, his spirit roused up as a strong man in the pulpit, and the crumbling tabernacle would shake by reason of the mighty workings of God within him. Indeed, he was always earnest; and we present a prominent peculiarity of the good man when we say he lived an earnest life.

The current of Mr. Reber's life did not run smooth. His short journey was along a hard path. His trials were many in the service of God and the

Church. December 31st, 1851, he closes his diary thus: "Thus has another year fled. Still we live, and in pretty good health. This because the Lord is patient, good, and merciful. For various causes, this year, taken as a whole, has been one of my bitterest years. God be praised that I have passed it without shipwreck. The furnace of my affliction was hot. My pleasant family circle is a peaceful refuge on this rough way. The Lord is the portion of my soul. May He thus remain to me. Amen." This is only a single inlet into what was common in his sorrowful life. But he sought not his portion on earth, and was not therefore disappointed when he found it not in the enjoyment of temporal comforts and conveniences.

Mr. Reber was remarkably modest and unassuming. Speaking of his plain and unpretending traits, Rev. S. H. Reid, who knew him well, very correctly says: "We may use this term *plain* in any way we choose, and it applies fully to him. In his dress, in his manners, in his style of living, in his speech, and in his preaching, plainness and simplicity were always to be distinctly seen. He made no pretensions to show and outward appearances. He rather studied to avoid these, and labored to cultivate simplicity of appearance as well as simplicity of heart."

In person, Mr. Reber was of medium size, firmly set, and ruggedly built, with broad, high shoulders, strongly marked features, a heavy brow and a fine forehead, with a slight tendency towards baldness. His voice was strong, with somewhat of an abrupt energy. He spoke little, except when it was neces-

sary. Yet, in his silence, he was not morose; but a calm and genial innocence always shone through the rough features of his face. Not only in his spirit, but even in his features, grace seemed to have made the mountains sink and the valleys rise, so that an even serenity lay upon his countenance as the sunlight on a landscape.

Mr. Reber had many warm friends, and those firmest who knew him best. As he enjoyed through life, so has he borne with him to the grave the undivided confidence of the Church. No better evidence of the estimation in which he was held by ministers and laity than the fact that, for some years before his death, he was commonly and familiarly called "DER TREUE JOEL."

Rest in peace, servant of Jesus Christ! The Lord will find thee in the day of glorious home-gathering. A brother, to whom, during twelve long years of ministerial labor, thou didst make thy heart transparent, and who knew thee as the world knows not, claims the privilege of uttering prophetically, with rising tears of joy, what will surely be heard at the great day: "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

## REV. HENRY FUNK.

1816 — 1855.

HENRY FUNK was born near Hagerstown, Md., May 7th, 1816. He was baptized in infancy, and confirmed in youth, as a member of the German Reformed Church. At an early period of life he felt his heart drawn towards the holy ministry; and, in order to prepare himself for the holy office, he entered Marshall College, at Mercersburg, in the eighteenth year of his age. As a student he was diligent and exemplary. He graduated in 1841.

He immediately entered the Theological Seminary, in which he took a full course, having spent altogether, in both institutions, nine years. Having finished his studies, he became a licentiate, and as such supplied the Boonsboro charge for the space of six months, in the absence of their regular pastor.

In the fall of 1844 Mr. Funk was called as assistant English pastor to Rev. D. S. Tobias in the Bloomsburg charge, Columbia County, Pa. On the 8th of December, 1844, he was ordained to the holy ministry, and installed in his charge, at Orangeville, by Rev. E. Kieffer and Rev. H. Harbaugh, a committee of the Susquehanna Classis. His field was large and laborious, but he served it for the

space of ten years with great faithfulness and self-sacrifice. He was married to a daughter of Mr. Snyder, a well-known and prominent citizen of Bloomsburg. She preceded him a short time to the better world. They had an only child, which survived its parents.

His health began to decline a few years before he was called away ; but he still pursued his calling as best he could. At length a slow consumption had done its work, and he fell asleep in Jesus, April 16th, 1855, aged 38 years, 11 months, and 9 days. His remains repose in the graveyard of the German Reformed church in Hagerstown.

Mr. Funk was an earnest, faithful, and zealous laborer. He preached very often. It is said that he averaged one sermon for every day of the month,—too much for his bodily strength. His field had been considerably desolated by distraction and division previous to his entering upon it, and much labor and wisdom were required to cultivate it. He, however, succeeded well ; and the heritage over which he presided gradually put on beauty and strength under his ministry, and that of his worthy colleague. Much of the fruit of his labors has only ripened since his death ; and the hands of his successor have been greatly strengthened by the preparatory work performed by him. His preaching was solemn and solid, and always left a good impression.

In his general character and life, Mr. Funk manifested the most excellent traits of a man and a Christian. He was amiable and modest, gentle and

humble, warm and true in his friendships, childlike and sincere in his devotion to God and the Church. Though he passed early away from earth, there are many who cherish pleasant recollections of his beautiful life; and all who knew him feel assured that he is safely at home among the "saints in light."



REV. HENRY K. ZERBE.<sup>1</sup>

1813 — 1846.

HENRY K. ZERBE was born in Berks County, Pa., July 21st, 1813. When quite young, his parents moved to Stark County, Ohio, where he grew up to manhood. He was baptized and raised in the German Reformed Church, and, at the proper time, confirmed and brought into full union with the kingdom of God.

He was ordained to the office of the holy ministry in 1845. Soon after his licensure, he received a call from the Basil charge, Fairfield County, Ohio, which he accepted. Here he labored faithfully for about one year, when it pleased the Lord to call him hence. He was a truly pious and good man.

“Being intimately acquainted with him,” says a friend, “I was with him almost every day; and during his last illness, which continued about a week, I was at his bedside night and day. He frequently spoke of his departure, and of his prospects of heaven; and left bright evidences of a blissful immortality. He spoke much about the Church and of Christianity during his sickness. The truth

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<sup>1</sup> Prepared by the Editor from materials furnished by Mr. Henry Leonard, of Basil, Ohio.

is, he only carried out in his dying moments what he professed and preached when in health."

Mr. Zerbe was a man of only ordinary natural endowments and limited education, yet he could preach a very good, plain, practical sermon, full of the love of God. This was the secret of his power. Love was his theme. He was an earnest man in the pulpit, and a kind and loving father in the family. He was kind to all; a most excellent pastor; social and agreeable in his habits; always the same; and for this reason he enjoyed the confidence of all. He had a very happy way of turning an ordinary conversation into one of a religious character.

He felt keenly, and deeply regretted, that so large a part of his life was spent in the service of sin. It is a feeling which many a good man has experienced, and with sad heart and tearful eyes confessed in after-life. On the blank leaf of one of his books, says Mr. Leonard, is found the following memorandum, recorded with his own hand: "Henry K. Zerbe—was born in the year of our Lord 1813, July 21st,—am now almost 32 years old,—served the devil till I was 29 years of age; and there is nothing that so much checks my devotions as the thought that all my best days were spent in rebelling against God. But I must try to forget the things that are behind, and grasp at the things that are before. May God in His mercy help me to serve him better. Amen."

Mr. Zerbe was eminently a man of peace. He loved peace, and sought to preserve and cherish it. He was a peacemaker, and doubtless experienced

the blessedness which is promised to such as seek peace. He bore the character of a peacemaker. "It may not be out of place," says one who knew him well, "to mention a fact or two to show how he stood, in this respect, in the estimation of other ministers. One time, at a meeting of Classis, there was considerable controversy, which was likely to result in bitter feelings; but through Mr. Zerbe harmony was restored, so that he acquired the name of 'mediator' among his brethren."

Many to whom he ministered in holy things, and many also among his ministerial brethren, will cherish with tender affection the memory of this good man. His short career has left its mark. His lovely and loving spirit, as it beamed from his eyes and wrought in his life, will not be forgotten. "The righteous are had in everlasting remembrance."

Mr. Zerbe was taken seriously ill with inflammation of the lungs about seven weeks before his death. For the first three weeks but little hope of his recovery was entertained. At the end of the fourth or fifth week, however, he had so far improved as to be able to walk about; only a bad cough remained with him. About this time, the weather being pleasant, he went with his family to pay a visit to one of the members of his church, Mr. Jones, about eleven miles distant from Basil. The weather having changed for the worse, his family returned home without him, while he was to await a more favorable time. On the Sabbath before his death one of his children was taken very ill, and

he was sent for. Riding along on the way home, he remarked to the person accompanying him that he felt remarkably well, and that his health was improving, and that the only thing that troubled him was his cough. Only a few minutes after he had made these remarks, he was seized with a coughing spell, which brought on a hemorrhage of the lungs. He was immediately taken very ill, so that he had to stop at the first house, five miles from home, and send for a physician. The sad news was carried to Basil, and friends went out with suitable arrangements for conveying him, and he was brought home in the evening of the same day. He was conscious of his approaching end, and said, "This will be my last sickness." He died at about one o'clock on the following Tuesday, July 28th, 1846, aged 33 years and 6 days, leaving a widow (who has since followed him) and two children to mourn his early death — their heavy loss! He died in great peace, uttering joyfully, as his last words: "Oh, yes, I am going!"

His remains lie buried in the Basil graveyard. The members of the congregation have since erected to his memory a neat marble tombstone, on which, by his own request, the following passage of Scripture is inscribed: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

His funeral, which took place on the following Thursday, was largely attended. There were ten ministers of the gospel present. A sermon was delivered in the German language, by Rev. H.

King, from Heb. xiii. 7, and one in English, by Rev. E. Kuhns, from Heb. xi. 4. Thus early in life, after a brief ministerial career, and amid many tears and sighs, a faithful servant of Christ and of his Church passed from the labors and toils of earth to the blessed reward of the pure in heaven.

## REV. WILLIAM STUMP.

1823 — 1851.

WILLIAM was the youngest of three brothers who were ministers in the German Reformed Church, sons of Mr. Frederick Stump. He was born on the 27th day of January, 1823, and died November 4th, 1851, aged 27 years, 2 months, and 7 days.

Mr. Stump<sup>1</sup> was early dedicated to the Lord in baptism by his pious parents. As in the case of the other members of this "household of faith," his mind was early and deeply impressed with a sense of the exceeding sinfulness of his own heart, the necessity of pardon and reconciliation with God. The kingdom of heaven, as the highest possible good, was first sought and obtained by him. How reasonably could this be expected, when piety was daily taught, both by precept and example, at the fireside of the parents of Mr. Stump.

In the nineteenth year of his age he made a public profession of his faith, and soon after was deeply impressed with the duty of preaching the gospel. "It was at this interesting period of his life," says one, "that I first became acquainted with him. Many pleasant hours were afterwards spent at his

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<sup>1</sup> The facts for this sketch were furnished by the Rev. J. McConnell.

father's fireside in conversation with him on this important subject; doubts were removed from his mind; and his purpose to enter the ministry was strengthened and confirmed. At these interesting interviews, the watchful and faithful mother was always present, to aid with her counsel and entreaties. On one occasion, her son, still somewhat undecided, remarked, 'Mother, the Church has already two of your sons: I will remain with you, and take care of you and father when you become old.' 'Go, my child,' she replied; 'God will take care of us. If I were a man, I would go and preach the gospel myself.' She wished to give all her sons to the Church, where her heart was. Highly honored of God and blessed among women must she be who raises up, as this mother has done, three sons for the work of the ministry."

So soon as the will of God became manifest to Mr. Stump, he at once commenced his preparations for the work of preaching the gospel. His studies were commenced under the auspices of Rev. J. Steiner, and were subsequently prosecuted under the care of the Rev. Geo. Schlosser, and his brothers Frederick and Adam Stump. Persuaded that a mind well cultivated and stored with useful knowledge would add greatly to his efficiency and success in the ministry, he availed himself of all such advantages as the best schools in his vicinity afforded. He prosecuted his studies with untiring zeal for several years; the last seven or eight months of which were devoted to the actual labors and practical duties of the ministry, under the care of, and in conjunction with, his brother Frederick.

He was licensed to preach the gospel by Miami Classis, Synod of Ohio, at its regular meeting in Shelby County, Ohio, May 21st, 1849. Having received and accepted a call from the Union charge, it was confirmed, and provision made by Classis for his ordination and installation, which took place August 1st, 1849.

The term of his labors in the holy office was short. His ministerial service continued but two years and three months. Brief as it was, it was not in vain — being characterized by great zeal and success. His territory was large and his labors incessant. He did not *rust*, but wore out in his Master's service; and to his excessive zeal may perhaps be traced mainly his early death.

His charge prospered greatly under his ministry, and many were added to the Church through his instrumentality. Those who wept most on the day of his burial were such as had been given him as "seals" of his ministry. Labor crowned with such success must have been faithful. His talents and education were but ordinary; yet his deep-toned piety, his zeal and earnestness, made him a useful and successful minister of Christ. His manner or style of preaching was not what the world calls eloquent, but it was highly practical and full of solemn unction. His words sounded forth as if the truth came from the depths of his soul. Those who heard him were impressed with the deep feeling and sincerity of the preacher.

Mr. Stump was of a mild and amiable disposition, which endeared him greatly to those who knew



him. He was also affectionate and friendly in his intercourse with his own people and those of the world around him, which made him beloved and popular.

He was an ardent friend and devoted husband. In the prosecution of his ministerial work, he made the cross of Christ his theme, and clung to it as to the life of his soul. He preached to others the same Saviour whom he himself loved and trusted. He was also a very consistent Christian as well as a faithful minister of Christ. His life was a daily confirmation of the truths he promulgated. His people had full confidence in his piety; this gave him great influence with them in spiritual things. When he died, they mourned the death of a *good man* as well as a faithful pastor.

Mr. Stump's illness was of rather a protracted character. Excessive labor and frequent exposure had so seriously impaired his constitution, that he suffered from physical prostration for some time; but his decided impression was that he would recover; and he flattered himself that he was fast recruiting. When, however, fears were expressed by his friends that his disease might have a serious issue, he remarked: "Whatever may be its termination, I am satisfied."

His conversation, during his sane moments, was mainly about the people of his charge, and the great interests of the Church of which he was a minister. The day before his death he was apparently unconscious until a few hours before he died, when he revived; and his end was calm, peaceful, and happy.

His death was not so triumphant as that of his brother Frederick, a year before ; yet it was marked by heaven as the death of a Christian — one well prepared to meet his God and Judge.

Among the many who mourned his early death, the heart of no one appeared so sad as that of his youthful wife, now his widow, who but five months before, full of hope and happiness, had united her destiny with his.<sup>1</sup> Like an angel of mercy, she kindly administered to all his wants while prostrated by disease ; but when death came, and robbed her of her best earthly treasure, joy fled, and the cup of her sorrow was full.

Alas, how soon was the mission of her love to her husband ended, and the world stood as a blank before her ! But death does not destroy, nor does the grave shut up the affection which we cherish for those whom we love and honor as the friends of God — the servants of the Most High ; and the love for them which still lives in our hearts is heaven's pledge that we shall meet again, and mingle with them in a future and better world.

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<sup>1</sup> Her maiden name was Drusilla A. Cost.

## REV. JOHN RIKE.

1826 — 1854.

THE Rev. John Rike was born in Montgomery County, Ohio, on the 11th of February, 1826. His parents' names were Christian and Sarah Rike. He was dedicated to God in infancy by his parents, in the ordinance of holy baptism, and was faithfully instructed in the doctrines and duties of the Christian religion. At the early age of fourteen, he assumed his baptismal vows by making an open and public profession of his faith in Christ. Some thought he was too young for such an important step, and therefore advised him to defer it to a future period. But when examined by his pastor, the Rev. D. Winters, he gave such satisfactory evidence of a correct understanding of the word of God, and of the purity of his motives, that he was at once admitted to the privileges of the Church. This profession he adorned to the day of his death; for, both before and after he devoted himself to the ministry, he always demeaned himself as an humble, devoted, and consistent follower of Christ. In this respect it may truly be said that he, "being dead, yet speaketh."

He felt himself called to preach the gospel at an early period of life. Being gifted in prayer, and free and easy in his address, he was often encouraged

to exercise his gifts in meetings for social prayer; and was strongly urged by persons in other churches to unite with them, and commence preaching at once without going through any regular preparatory training as required by his own mother church. He was, however, fixed in his purpose, and in this displayed more good sense than his ill-advisers. As the German Reformed Church in the West had at this time no institutions to which he could go, he availed himself of the opportunities which offered themselves in the city of Dayton for acquiring an education. As soon, however, as the Synod of Ohio established its Theological Seminary in Columbus, he at once went there, and finished his preparatory studies under the care and instruction of Rev. A. P. Freeze. While connected with the Seminary he sought to be useful, by preaching, under the direction of his professor, at such points as needed his services. He also rendered essential service to the church in Columbus, which had but recently been organized, by making visits through the bounds of the Lancaster Classis, and taking up collections to aid in the erection of a house of worship.

He had been baptized and confirmed by Rev. D. Winters, who also now presided at his ordination and installation in the West Alexandria charge.

Having finished his studies, he received an urgent call from the West Alexandria charge. This call he accepted, and entered at once upon the active duties of the ministry. The charge having been destitute of a pastor for some time, the members had become scattered and discouraged. It, how-

ever, soon recovered, and increased in numerical strength and efficiency under his ministry.

He was married to Rosanna, daughter of the Hon. Joseph Stuckey, of Fairfield County, Ohio, on the 13th of April, 1849. He had two sons, one of whom preceded him to the world of spirits in the spring preceding his death; the other is still living to comfort his mother in the sorrow and grief of her widowhood. He was a kind husband and affectionate father, so that his house was the abode of domestic peace and happiness.

He continued his labors in the West Alexandria charge about five years, during all of which time he grew in the love and affection of his people. He labored with much acceptance, and secured for himself, by his mild and prudent course, and Christian deportment, many warm and devoted friends. The church in the town of West Alexandria was built during his ministry, and chiefly by his untiring efforts. He was assisted in its consecration by Revs. D. Winters and Geo. W. Williard. The congregation, as a token of respect and gratitude to their beloved pastor for his self-denying labors in their midst, gave to the church the name of St. John; little thinking that he would in the course of a few months be numbered with the saints and general assembly of the church of the first-born in heaven.

In the early part of the spring of 1854, when his charge had become fairly established, he received a unanimous and urgent call from the Lancaster charge, which had been destitute of a pastor for some time. The call came with solemn weight,

challenging his most serious and prayerful consideration. Several months elapsed before the path of duty became plain. There were strong and tender ties that bound him to the people of his first charge which could not be separated except by a severe struggle on his part. At length he became convinced that the interests of the Church required his acceptance of the call to the Lancaster charge. And although there were many and great discouragements in his new field of labor, he hesitated not, after he had become satisfied as to what was duty in the case, but went forward in reliance upon his divine Master, saying he might as well make the sacrifice as any one else. He therefore bade adieu to his people, to whom he had become closely allied during a ministry of five years, and removed to Lancaster, Fairfield County, Ohio, the 1st of June, 1854. The prospect of extended usefulness soon began to brighten — confidence was restored in the membership of his new charge — peace and harmony began to prevail, and all indicated a prosperous future. Only a few weeks before his death, he wrote to a neighboring minister: "I am pleased with my charge — my prospects of usefulness are brightening, and are better than I expected." It was in the midst of such encouragements that he was called from his labors on earth to his reward in heaven. How mysterious are often the ways of Providence, in the removal of His servants when their prospects of usefulness seem the brightest!

His illness was short. He was first taken to his bed with dysentery on Sabbath. At first no one

apprehended any danger. He himself did not seem to be aware of the near approach of death until the Wednesday following, when he called his beloved companion to his bedside, and communicated to her the sad intelligence "that his work on earth was done, and that he desired her to train up their son in the ways of piety and godliness, and to settle up their affairs honorably, assuring her that God would take care of her as he had promised in His word." Death had no terrors for him. He had long before made his peace with God, and knew in whom he had believed. He therefore sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, in the hope of a blessed resurrection, on Thursday, the 7th of September, 1854, aged 28 years, 6 months, and 27 days.

He was buried near Sugar Grove, Fairfield County, Ohio, at his own request, in the family graveyard of his wife's friends. Shortly before his death, he requested that Rev. Geo. W. Williard, of Columbus, Ohio, should attend to his funeral services. As the dispatch did not, however, reach him in time to be present at his burial, the regular services were deferred until Thursday, the 14th of September, one week after his death, when the solemn occasion was improved by a discourse on the words of the Apostle Paul, Phil. i. 21: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain;" on which occasion Mr. Williard was assisted by Revs. George Weiss and J. B. Thompson.

The sad news of his death produced a deep impression throughout the Church. All seemed to feel his loss as a faithful and devoted minister of Christ, as they had entertained strong expectations of his

usefulness and success in his new and important field of labor.

Arrangements had been made for his installation, which was to have taken place a few days after his death, and extended plans of usefulness were laid. But God ordered it otherwise, and thus gave another evidence that the success of His cause does not depend upon men, with whom we are often disposed to think it inseparably connected. The epitaph of Charles Wesley is here in point, "God buries His workmen, but carries on His work."

He was an acceptable and instructive preacher, a close student, and an attentive observer, which made him a workman that needed not to be ashamed. Whenever he came before his people he came with a message well studied and prepared from the word of God. He was also successful as a pastor, and gained many friends by his mild, prudent, and conciliatory course.

A plain, neat monument has been erected at his grave, with an appropriate inscription.

Resolutions respecting his death were passed both by the Lancaster and Miami Classes, with which he had at different times been connected. A sermon was preached before the Miami Classis, agreeably to request, by the Rev. D. Winters, under whose ministry the deceased had been reared.



## MEMORIALS AND ANNALS.

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THE reasons for inserting these brief and imperfect sketches and fragmentary notices are the same as those assigned by the Author in the Second Volume. They form an integral part of the history of the Church, and will serve the purpose of making future researches more easy and successful. They were mostly prepared by the Author himself and designated as for this volume. We have added all we could, in order to complete the series for the special period which the volume covers, and have arranged the whole of them in chronological order, so as to make them correspond, in this respect, with those of the preceding volume. The sketches we have thus added are indicated by our initials — “D. Y. H.”

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### REV. JACOB SCHNEIDER.

MR. SCHNEIDER came from Europe, and was first ■ teacher, and also preacher, somewhere in the State of New York. Thence he came to Frederick, Md., in 1787, where he preached, taught, and made trouble. (See Life of Rev. Runkel in Vol. II.) Later, he was principal of an academy in Leesburg, Loudon County, Va., and still later, at Harper's Ferry, preaching during this time in Lovettsville and other places in that region. Thence he went to Woodstock, Va. After some time he returned to Leesburg. He preached in an irregular manner in many parts of Virginia. He is said to have been a good speaker, and

espacially a good teacher of the languages and higher branches of science. He was polite in his manner and agreeable in conversation. He died in 1826, in Leesburg, and is buried in the graveyard connected with the German Reformed church in Lovettsville, Va., where his grave is marked by tombstones put up by his friends. He was not a member of Synod, and is mentioned here only on account of his relations at certain times to German Reformed congregations.

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### REV. JOHN CHRISTOPHER FABER.

MR. FABER was pastor at Chambersburg a few years; but how long exactly is not known. He preached his farewell sermon in the spring of 1789. As a preacher he was respectable, but not above mediocrity. (Bonnell's Hist. of Ger. Ref. Cong. Chambersburg, p. 8.)

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### REV. JOHN G. PHRIEMER.

THIS man, connected with the religious movement which resulted at length in the sect of the "United Brethren in Christ," and sometimes professing to be a minister of the German Reformed Church, made frequent and extensive preaching tours through the middle of Pennsylvania, towards the close of the last and the beginning of the present century. He is still remembered by aged persons, especially in the Valleys of the Susquehanna. The aged Mrs. Fulmer says that about the year 1792, Andrew Straub and Michael Wheeland were wont at certain times to push a canoe, containing their families and others, across the river, where Milton now is, in order to worship under a tree on the opposite side. The tree stood near where Mr. Hoffman now (1854) lives, about half a mile above the bridge. On such occasions the preaching and services were conducted by Mr. Phriemer, and sometimes by Rev. J. Dietrich Aurand. They also went across in the same way when worship was held by the same men at Lewisburg. Mrs. Fulmer herself so crossed the river to attend worship under

the tree. Milton was laid out one year later, in 1793. The expression, "Phriemers Leute," was a common expression in Buffalo Valley at an early day. He was very fanatical. A very pious old man once said to us: "Er hat die Leute zu Narren gepredigt." He is said once to have remarked that "he could preach the devil out of hell!" He is frequently referred to in Newcomer's Journal, with whom he stood in great favor. In the Minutes of Synod for the year 1806, we find the following: "A letter was read from Mr. Weber, of Pittsburg, in which he complains exceedingly of a certain man named Phriemer, who has endeavored to make the congregation in that place believe that he was ordained by the Synod. He wishes, therefore, a decisive and authenticated answer in reference to his ordination." Synod ordered the following, with the seal of Synod, to be sent him: "That this man not only has not been ordained by the Synod, but also that this Synod pronounce his ordination, performed by one individual member of Synod, as null and void." Later he went West. Mr. Abraham Brown, of Buffalo Valley, saw him in Ohio in 1814, where Mr. Phriemer was at that time on a visit, he residing in Kentucky, where he was Associate Judge of the Court. Mr. Brown says: "Er war zu allem zu gebrauchen." Still later, it seems, he took to preaching again. Mr. Spayth, in his history of the "United Brethren in Christ," mentions him as present at the Conference in 1825. He "appeared in good health, and preached with his usual clearness and power." He died at his home in Harrison County, Indiana, in 1825. It is also said in the same work, p. 171, "That Bro. Phriemer preached with more life and energy than ever," in his last days, and that he died "having assurance that he was going to the great assembly in heaven."

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### REV. MR. MANN.

MR. MANN was examined and ordained at the Cötus in 1792. "He was found to be not only well-grounded in theological science, but also pure in the doctrines of the Church." (Min., 1792.) From the Minutes of 1793, it appears that he was located in

Lower Saucon and Springfield; and in this year, as well as in 1795, he had trouble in his charge, arising from division and strife. We do not find his name on the Minutes later than 1802.

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### REV. JAMES HOFFMAN.

JAMES HOFFMAN was a native of Madison County, Va. In 1795, application was made at Synod, in Faulkner Swamp, for his examination, and also his brother Daniel Hoffman. "After the testimonials of both the Messrs. Hoffman, which were furnished them by several congregations in Virginia, were read before Synod, and the circumstances of that section of country presented, a committee was appointed who should first examine them as to whether they possess the requisite knowledge." This was done, and the committee reported that they ought to continue their studies another year. In 1796 the Synod met in Philadelphia, where they were approved and ordained. Rev. James Hoffman labored afterwards a number of years in and around Woodstock, Va.

He was later called to Chambersburg, Pa., where he was installed in October, 1807. He continued pastor here till 1818. "Under his ministry, for some time at least, the Church flourished. He was beloved by many, and his preaching talents were superior; he seems also to have labored with a good degree of diligence. His venerable appearance, his snow-white locks, his earnest and impressive manner in the pulpit, are all distinctly remembered by many members of the congregation."

Unhappily, difficulties arose: he was censured by many, he was defended by others; with what degree of justice is not now a matter of much consequence. True it is, that this interruption of the peace of the congregation led many to withdraw from it, and as Pastor Hoffman continued to preach in town, this ultimately led to the formation of the church known as "The United Brethren in Christ." Pastor Hoffman resided here until September, 1826, when he removed to Mansfield, Ohio, and there died, August 2d, 1834, in the seventy-fifth year

of his age." (Bonnell's Hist. of Chamb. Cong., p. 13. See also Minutes of Synod, 1818, pp. 14, 15, and 17, 18.)

After he ceased preaching in the Chambersburg congregation in 1818, he still continued to serve the churches in Shippensburg, Solomon's Scherer's, Campbelstown, and Strasburg. We find his name in connection with these congregations as late as 1823, on the Minutes.

Rev. H. Kroh, who was on a missionary visit through Ohio at that time, was with him when he expired, and attended his funeral. (Mess., Oct. 15th, 1834.) "He ended his active and useful life in the service of the Lord. His sun set in an unclouded sky; not to be extinguished, but to rise again in a purer brightness and fuller glory." (Mess., Nov. 1st, 1834.)

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### REV. JACOB CHRISTMAN.

At the meeting of Synod in Lancaster, Pa., April 30th, 1798, "A petition was received from six congregations in North Carolina, asking that Mr. Christman, from their vicinity, be ordained as their minister." He was examined, and, having rendered satisfaction, was ordained in the evening of the 1st of May, by a committee of Synod. He is the man alluded to by Rev. Larose in his autobiography, to which the reader is referred. In 1809 he went to Ohio, and is reputed to have been the first German Reformed minister in that State. (West Miss., March 14th, 1867.) He died in 1810, aged 65 years.

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### REV. PETER EISENBERG.

MR. EISENBERG was examined and licensed at the meeting of Synod in 1800. His license was in 1802 renewed for three years, instead of one, "for important considerations." "Grove" is placed over against his name in the Minutes of 1802. He is mentioned as "deceased" in the Minutes of 1805.

## REV. HENRY DIEFFENBACH.

MR. DIEFFENBACH was a native of Virginia, and elder brother of the Rev. Jacob Dieffenbach. At the meeting of Synod, in 1800, at York, Pa., a request was made, by some congregations in Augusta County, Va., to have Mr. Dieffenbach placed over them as pastor. His examination was not satisfactory, but he was appointed to labor as catechist. (Syn. Min., 1800, pp. 26, 27.) Two years later, he is reported as stationed in North Carolina; and a request from some congregations in Guilford, Orange, and Randolph counties, was presented, "asking Synod to place Mr. Dieffenbach in a position to serve them in all respects as a German Reformed minister." A committee was appointed to examine him, who reported favorably, and it was resolved to ordain him that evening, May 18th, 1802. (Min., pp. 30, 32, 33.) How long he labored in this field, we cannot say. In 1805 he asked "permission to resign his charge, in consequence of ill health." The Synod advised him to remain for the present. He attended Synod from year to year with tolerable regularity; but must have relinquished his charge some time afterwards, as, in 1813, an urgent request came up from these very congregations begging Synod to "send them a minister."

His declining health, and possibly more serious and less excusable causes,<sup>1</sup> had probably compelled him to resign his charge and retire from the active duties of the ministry. In the Minutes of 1817, p. 8, he is excused for "being frequently absent, on account of bodily infirmities." As late as 1819, he appears in some way still to have been engaged in the ministry, as his name stands among those who are reported as not "having taken up any collection," or "paid anything into the treasury." (Min., 1819, p. 31.) His name disappears from the Minutes after 1821, when he left the Synod. (Min., 1822, p. 28.) His whole history is involved in some obscurity. In 1822, the Independent Synod met in Kutztown, Pa., when he is reported

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<sup>1</sup>In a letter to his younger brother, the Rev. Jacob Dieffenbach, his venerable father expresses the hope that he will not give up preaching, "as Henry has done." (See Memoir, p. 145.)

as being Secretary. (See Memoir of Rev. Th. H. Leinbach.) In 1838 and 1839 he was in Ohio, where he probably died. (Min., O. Syn., 1839, p. 32.) D. Y. H.

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### REV. JOHN H. DREYER.

IN February, 1801, the consistory of the Second German Reformed church in Baltimore called Rev. Dr. Becker, who declined the call. "The congregation then turned their attention to the *Bremen Ministerium* in Germany, and made out a call, with a blank, to be filled up with the name of such a minister as they might recommend. The blank was filled with the name of Rev. John H. Dreyer, who in a short time sailed for Baltimore; and in the beginning of the following year, 1802, he took charge of this congregation." (Dr. Heiner's Cent. Sermon, p. 29.) He remained here as pastor four years. In 1803 he was received as a member of Synod. (Minutes.) About the year 1805 he went back to Europe; but returned again in 1811, and accepted a call to the Forsyth Street German Reformed church in New York. He applied again to be received as a member of Synod in that year, but action on his request was deferred till the next meeting of Synod. (Min., 1811.) It does not appear that he was received the following year. (See Life of Rev. Kunkel.) Later, a few years, he went back to Europe again. Returned to this country about 1830. During the years 1831 and 1832 he edited, at York, *Die Evangelische Zeitung der Deutschen Reformiten Kirche in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nord Amerika*. From a file of these papers in our possession, it appears that he was a man of learning and zeal.

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### REV. ADAM ETTINGER.

MR. ETTINGER'S name appears first on the Minutes of Synod at its meeting in Philadelphia, May 8th, 1803. There he applied for license. The committee "found him as well qualified as could be expected of one in his circumstances." "It was re-

solved that Mr. Ettinger be licensed" for one year. The next year his license was renewed. He was ordained in 1805. His principal field of labor was in York County. He afterwards fell in with the "United Brethren" movement. (Gössler's reply to Gock, p. 153.) He was successor of Mr. Gobrecht in the Abbottstown charge — was also once pastor of the Hanover congregation — was a sickly man — died in the upper part of York County — is said to have been a very earnest preacher — plain in dress and common in his manners. Tradition says: "Er hat sich tod gepredigt." (Rev. J. L. Reber.)

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### REV. JOHN DIETRICH ADAMS.

MR. ADAMS was from Hessen, in Germany, and is said to have been a learned man and good preacher, but not as consistent as he ought to have been. When he landed in Baltimore, and called on Dr. Becker, the latter advised him, in view of the prejudice prevailing here against his countrymen, to conceal his Hessian origin; but he is said to have brought his fist down upon his knees, and with much earnestness to have said: "No, sir; if people won't have me as a Hessian, they need not have me at all!" This shows him to have been at least honest and straightforward.

At the Synod in New Holland, Lancaster County, Pa., May 15th, 1808, a call was presented from the congregations of Sunbury, Middle Creek, Bauerman's, Beaverdam, and Mohr's church, to Mr. Adams. He presented himself for examination, and, having rendered satisfaction, permission was granted him to accept the call; the next year, 1809, "Mr. Adams presented his testimonials from Germany, with which the Synod was fully satisfied, and accordingly received him as a member." (Min. of Synod, 1809.) In 1812 "complaints were lodged by Mr. Hoffmeier against Mr. Adams, on account of his bad course of life." It was resolved that Mr. Adams be notified to attend the next annual meeting of Synod, and defend himself against the complaints laid against him; of which proceeding his congregations shall also be informed. In case he does not appear,



however, he shall be excommunicated." (Min., 1812.) He did not appear, but wrote a letter, requesting that his name be stricken from the roll of Synod, itself an evidence of his guilt. He was accordingly expelled. (Min., 1813.) Tradition says love for strong drink was his sin. Alas! how many has it ruined! He died soon after.

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### REV. HENRY B. SCHAFFNER.

WITH Mr. Schaffner's early life we are not acquainted. In the year 1808 he entered the ministry, and his name appears in the Minutes in connection with some congregations in Lancaster County, Pa., namely, Columbia, Marietta, Maytown, Elizabethtown, and Rapho. In this charge he continued to labor until about the year 1840, when, for some cause, he was deposed from the ministry. He, however, kept on preaching in such of the congregations as still adhered to him.

Mr. Schaffner was a man of some ability, with some reputation as a public speaker; but his character was reputed to be less fair. His influence in the congregations which he had formerly served was extremely injurious, as, by his persistence in preaching, he prevented others, to a great extent, from laboring with success. Towards the close of his life, he was severely afflicted. During this period we occasionally visited him. After much suffering from a disease in one or both of his feet, pronounced by his physician to be "gangrene," he died at his residence in Marietta, Lancaster County, Pa., where he had spent the greater portion of his life. His remains, if we mistake not, repose in the graveyard attached to the old Union church in the town of Marietta. — D. Y. H.

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### REV. SAMUEL STÆHR.

SAMUEL STÆHR was born in the neighborhood in which he lived, labored, and died, — Springfield, Bucks County, Pa., October 28th, 1785. At the age of nine years he lost his father;

but having been blessed with a pious mother, he was early made a subject of divine grace, and soon after had his attention directed towards the holy ministry. He commenced his studies with the Rev. Mr. Senn, at the age of nineteen years, continued them under the direction of the Rev. J. W. Dechant, and finished them with the Rev. J. C. Becker, D. D., of Northampton Co., Pa. He was ordained in 1811, at the meeting of Synod, in Frederick, Md., and immediately thereafter took charge of the congregations of Springfield, Durham, Nocamixon, and Tinicum, in Bucks County, Pa., in which he continued to labor faithfully and with much success until the time of his death, a period of thirty years. During this time he baptized eight hundred infants and eighty-three adults, and confirmed six hundred and eighty-three persons. He died, after an illness of three weeks, September 27th, 1843, aged 57 years, 10 months, and 29 days, leaving a widow and nine children. On the 29th his remains were interred in the graveyard connected with the Durham church, in the midst of a large concourse of relatives and friends. His colleague, Rev. Mr. Miller, delivered an address at the house, and Rev. Daniel Weiser preached a funeral sermon at the church. He is said to have been an excellent man and a faithful minister.<sup>1</sup>

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### REV. JACOB H. WIESTLING.

MR. WIESTLING was the son of Samuel C. Wiestling and Anna Maria, his wife, whose maiden name was Bucher. He was born in 1793, and reared in the vicinity of Harrisburg, Pa., where his parents for many years resided. In 1812 he was licensed to preach the gospel, and about the same time settled in Hanover, York County, Pa., taking charge of three congregations, (Syn.

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<sup>1</sup> He is still spoken of as a very popular preacher in his own simple way. He had a wonderful power over the hearts and affections of his hearers. In what precisely this power consisted is hard to say; but probably in the fact that, as a man of limited attainments, he spoke in simplicity and to the heart. — D. Y. H.

Min., 1812, p. 54.) Some difficulty having afterwards occurred in reference to the Manchester congregation, he stood disconnected from the Synod for some years. Application in his behalf was made to Synod in 1821, and in the following year he was received again as a member of that body, (Syn. Min., 1822, pp. 9, 10.) Several other congregations were added to his charge, and his field of labor consisted of five congregations, in which he continued to preach to the end of his life.

Mr. Wiestling was a man of talent and more than ordinary pulpit abilities. Many of the older people still remember him, and speak of him with much affection. He died in 1826, aged 33 years, and is buried in the graveyard connected with the church in the town of Hanover, the place of his residence. The last sermon he preached was on the words: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." John xiv. 27. — D. Y. H.

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### REV. JOHN FELIX.

THE name of Mr. Felix appears upon the Minutes of Synod of 1817, as a candidate or licentiate. In 1819, he, among others, was ordained to the office and work of the ministry. At this time he had charge of the following congregations: Howarter's, Himmel's and St. Peter's, in Northumberland, and Deep Creek, in Schuylkill County, Pa. Here he remained only a few years. In 1823 we find him in Union, now Snyder County, having charge of the following congregations, viz., Hassinger's, Freeburg, Schnee's, Beaverdam, Nitch, and Mosser's Valley. In the year 1825, his name is marked "omitted" in the Minutes of Synod, and is not mentioned again. What became of him we know not. — D. Y. H.

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### REV. DANIEL J. H. KIEFFER.

MR. KIEFFER was licensed in 1818, and, according to the custom then prevalent, became a candidate for ordination. About this time he was appointed to make a missionary tour to North

Carolina, but failed to do so. He took charge of the following congregations in Somerset County, Pa., viz., Somerset, Gideon's, Zion's, Stoystown, and Samuel's. In 1819 he was ordained to the ministry, (Min., 1819, p. 22,) and formally set over these congregations, which he continued to serve, with more or less regularity, up to 1836, when, because of his non-appearance at Classis, and the evil reports which were afloat concerning him, his name was stricken from the list of ministers. (Min., 1836, p. 18.) After this his name does not again appear on the Minutes. The exact date of his death we are not able to give. — D. Y. H.

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### REV. DIETRICH GRAVES.

MR. GRAVES came from Europe. The first we know of him in this country, he was attending a drug-store for a man in Philadelphia. When he became serious in religious matters, he was already pretty well advanced in life. When he opened to his employer his thoughts of entering upon the ministry, he told him he was a fool to entertain such an idea! He thought otherwise, and acted out his convictions manfully. He did not pass through a regular course of study, but was intelligent, had good solid sense, and much prudence and zeal. He had a wife and several children when he entered the ministry, and was then, and ever after, much oppressed with poverty.

Mr. Graves was ordained at the Synod which met at Hagerstown, Md., September, 1820. His first charge was Uniontown, where he resided, and Taneytown, Md. Here he labored nine years. Thence he was called to Woodstock, Va., but was in the course of a year called back to his former charge. He did not please the people at Woodstock, nor they him. He said: "Mein Gott! hier ist kein Leben in den Leuten." From here he removed to Shippensburg in the fall of 1832. "Here he began his work with earnestness. His public and private walk and conversation manifested that his soul lived and delighted in the presence of God. The sweet savor of his life, and the salutary effects of his labors, still remain wherever he has lived as a minister of the Cross. There are sufficient grounds for the

confident belief that many souls will adorn the crown of his rejoicing in the day when God shall make up his jewels." (Mess., May, 1833.) He died at Shippensburg, very suddenly, on Friday morning, March 22d, 1833, aged 57 years. A pleasant savor hangs around his memory there, and generally. He was familiarly known as "Father Graves." Is his grave attended to by those whom he served, as it becomes Christians?

In person he was lean; he had a serious countenance and an earnest look. His preaching was plain, practical, and powerful. Some one of his hearers was heard to say to another minister: "Wann der Mann so anhält zu predigen, so bricht er mein Herz! so bricht er mein Herz!"

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### REV. JOHN NICHOLAS ZEISER.

MR. ZEISER was licensed as a catechist by the Synod in the year 1820, and ordained to the holy ministry in September, 1821, during the Synod at Reading. He had come from Europe, and first engaged as a school-master. In this calling he did not succeed well. He stood a good examination in theology before Synod. As soon as received by Synod, he went to Luzerne County, Pa. He resided below Wilkesbarre, on the North Branch of the Susquehanna, and his charge, as given in the Minutes of 1822, included Hanover, Newport, Susquehanna, Nescopeck, Salem, Schwarz Creek, Conyngham, and Sugar Loaf. He labored in this charge till his death in 1840.

He had a son who entered the ministry, and labored for some time in the western part of Pennsylvania.

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### REV. JOHN PETER DECHANT.

MR. DECHANT applied at the Synod of Carlisle, in 1818, for license. The committee appointed to examine him reported favorably, and recommended him for licensure; but some objection was made, and the license was refused. So, in 1819, he was

again recommended; but some other difficulties were started, and he was not licensed. (Min., 1819, p. 18.) It appears that the application was renewed at the meeting of Synod in Reading, Pa., in 1821; and a committee was finally appointed to examine him, with some others, in Ohio, where he had been for some time laboring, and, if circumstances should warrant it, to ordain him. In the following year the committee reported that they had attended to their duty, and ordained Mr. Dechant. (Syn. Min., 1822, p. 13.) He was pastor for some years of seven congregations located in Champaign, Clark, and Montgomery counties, in Ohio, where he died in 1824, aged 42 years.—D. Y. H.

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### REV. CHARLES KNAUS.

MR. KNAUS was in all probability a native of Montgomery Co., Pa., and a fellow-student of John Rudy, Geo. Mills, and Benj. Boyer, under the Rev. Samuel Helffenstein, D. D., in Philadelphia. He was ordained in 1821, having received a call to Lincoln County, N. C.; which, however, he afterwards declined, and was called to account for it by Synod. He gave his reasons, which were deemed satisfactory. (Syn. Min., 1822, p. 12.) In 1823 he is reported as having charge of Millerstown, in Lehigh County, *probably*. How long he remained here, or what he accomplished, does not appear. He was very careless in reporting to Synod—a bad sign. He went to New York, where he preached a few years—how long we cannot say. He died there in 1830. Of his character and abilities as a minister of the people, we have no knowledge. From some incidental matters, we should judge him to have been deficient in scholarship.—D. Y. H.

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### REV. GEORGE MILLS.

MR. MILLS was a native of Montgomery County, Pa. In 1820–21, he was, along with Benj. Boyer, Charles Knaus, and John Rudy, a student under the Rev. Samuel Helffenstein, D. D.,

in the city of Philadelphia. In 1822 he came before Synod at Harrisburg, Pa., with a call from several congregations in Dauphin County, asking that he be placed over them. He received permission to serve the congregations at Middletown and Hummelstown as catechist. (Syn. Min., 1822, pp. 6, 9.) In 1823 he sent a letter to Synod, stating that he had prospects of getting congregations to serve in North Carolina, and requesting to be ordained by a committee the ensuing spring. Synod resolved, that, in case Mr. Mills should receive a call, he must appear before that body. (Min., 1823, p. 8.) Whether he ever succeeded in getting ordination in the Reformed Church does not appear; although it is likely he did; and in 1824 he appears to have been still laboring in the vicinity of Harrisburg. (See Min., 1824, p. 22.) In 1826 he was in Philadelphia. (Min., 1826, p. 22.) He subsequently went to New York, where also he ended his days. (Letter of Dr. Samuel Helffenstein, July 14th, 1857.)

The latest *probable* notice we have of him is in 1832, when a certain William Smidmer, who was then preaching in Lewistown, Waynesburg, and Huntingdon, Pa., applied to Synod for ordination. From the report of the committee appointed to inquire into his case, it appears that he "had studied theology under the care of Rev. Mr. Mills, in New York," and was subsequently "licensed to preach the gospel" by the so-called "Free Synod." (Syn. Min., 1832, pp. 11, 13, 14.) — D. Y. H.

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### REV. JOHN RUDY.

MR. RUDY was by birth a Swiss, but came to this country in his youth. He was examined and ordained by Synod in 1821. Having been now introduced into the ministry, he took charge of congregations in North Carolina, where he labored several years, it is said, with much success. Next he received and accepted a call from two German Reformed congregations in the State of New York, one of which was in Germantown. Here he labored ten years. After this he moved into the city of New York, with a view of establishing a German congrega-

tion of Europeans. In this enterprise he was supported for several years by the Domestic Missionary Board; after which, for important reasons, it passed into the connection of the Dutch Reformed Church, and he became a member of that body about two years before his death. A convenient church was erected under his ministry, which was consecrated a short time previous to his death—the Houston Street church, in which it is said there is now a very flourishing congregation. It was greatly prospering when he was called away. He was an earnest, faithful, and active minister. His natural honesty and open-heartedness, associated with unfeigned piety, gave his character a coloring of amiability that attracted every one to him who made his acquaintance. He died in peace and hope, February 8th, 1842.

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### REV. DANIEL RAHAUSER.

MR. RAHAUSER'S ministry is involved in some uncertainty. We, for the first time, meet with his name, on the list of ministers, in the Minutes of 1821,<sup>1</sup> when he is pastor of three congregations, viz., Harmony, in Butler, and Wolf's Creek and Crill's, in Mercer County, Pa. Here he appears to have labored for some eight or ten years; when he removed to Ashland, Ohio. Here we find him having under his care and spiritual supervision four congregations. In this charge he remained until the close of his life.

Of his character as a man and a preacher, we cannot say anything definitely. He frequently failed to report his congregations, which renders it difficult to obtain a clear idea of his labors. He died in Mifflin, Ohio, January 3d, 1848, after laboring in the Church, in which he was born and reared, about twenty-seven years.—D. Y. H.

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<sup>1</sup> In the Min. of Synod for 1822, p. 19, he is called upon to say why he did not accept the call from Pendleton County, Va.; which shows that he was at least licensed, if not ordained, at this time.



## REV. GEORGE F. TRÖGER.

OF Mr. Tröger's early life we know nothing. In 1822 he came to the Synod, in Harrisburg, Pa., and presented a call to him, as a "candidate" or licentiate, from the Chestnut Hill charge in Northampton County, Pa., asking for the confirmation of the call, and ordination. A committee, appointed for the purpose, examined him; and finding him qualified, recommended him for ordination, which was attended to during the meeting of the Synod. His charge consisted of two congregations—Chestnut Hill and Ross. In this field he continued to labor about four years; not, however, with that fidelity which becomes a servant of the Lord. In 1824, already, he failed to hand in a report of his congregations; and the same ominous story is repeated in the Minutes of 1825—"No report" being attached to his name. In the Minutes of the following year, 1826, we have the expected finale of this careless stewardship, in the characteristic German phrase: "Ausgerissen." (See Min. of Synod, 1822-1826.)—D. Y. H.

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## REV. H. H. KNÖBEL.

IN the Minutes of Synod for 1822, Mr. Knöbel's name appears as pastor of five congregations in parts of Schuylkill and Northumberland counties. In 1823 two more are added; and in 1826 his charge is composed of nine congregations, viz., Schwaben Creek, Herb's, Peter's, and Shamokin, in Northumberland; and Deep Creek, Williams' Valley, and Klinger's, in Schuylkill; and Roaring Creek, in Columbia County, Pa.

In this extensive field Mr. Knöbel labored, as pastor, until the year 1838-39, when he was expelled, and his name disappears from the list of ministers. His death probably occurred soon after. Of his character and preaching abilities we cannot say anything definitely.—D. Y. H.

## REV. JOSEPH LA ROS.

JOSEPH LA ROS — now written La Rose — was born in Lehigh County, Pa., about the year 1800. He studied theology under the Rev. J. C. Becker, D. D., which, from some papers of his, appears to have been during the years 1821, '22, and '23. After a proper examination, he was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1823. About the year 1824 he became pastor of the Hummelstown and neighboring congregations. Here he labored for two or three years. On the 21st of April, 1825, he was married to Miss Elizabeth Ernst. Some time after this he removed to Bloomsburg, Columbia County, Pa., to take charge of the German Reformed interests of that region, as successor of Rev. Jacob Dieffenbach. Here he had labored only a few years, when he was cut down in the prime of life. His remains repose in the graveyard attached to the Columbia (Bloomsburg?) church, without a stone to mark the spot where he is buried.

As a preacher, Mr. La Ros was energetic — possessed something of the French vivacity, from which people he was a descendant, as his name indicates. Though his education was limited, yet, being industrious, he wrote many sermons, and is said to have been a good preacher. (Letter of Rev. M. A. Smith.) — D. Y. H.

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## REV. HENRY L. RICE.

THE labors of Mr. Rice in the German Reformed Church were brief, but blessed in their fruits. He had spent two years on a mission in the West, and had been eight years pastor of the Reformed Dutch church, Spottswood, New Jersey, when, in February, 1834, he was invited to visit the German Reformed congregation in Chambersburg, Pa. The result of his visit was a call, which he accepted, and entered upon his duties as pastor in May following. Difficulties had existed in the congregation, arising chiefly from the transition of the congregation from the German to the English language. In these

circumstances, Mr. Rice proved a true blessing to the congregation. "He came with the experience of ten years of active labor in the ministry, with a tone of piety sincere, fervent, and deep. His personal appearance was prepossessing, his delivery good; and with a good voice under great control, his ministrations, though not exhibiting profound thought, were highly interesting and edifying." (Bonnell's Sermon, p. 18.) The church was greatly improved both externally and internally during his ministry.

In the fall of 1836, Pastor Rice was induced to undertake an agency for the institutions of the church then located at Mercersburg, his pulpit having meanwhile been supplied by neighboring brethren. In the spring of 1837 he returned to his family somewhat indisposed. This at first excited no special alarm; but he grew worse. Fever had planted itself in his constitution, which baffled all medical skill, and he died on the 3d of May, 1837, in the forty-second year of his age, having labored a little more than three years in the German Reformed Church. He is buried by the side of his wife, who died about a month later, in the graveyard of the church he served in Chambersburg. The congregation manifested their gratitude for his faithful services and their respect for his memory, by erecting a beautiful monument, with suitable inscriptions, over the graves of the pastor and the pastor's wife. Pious while he lived, he died in peace, with a bright hope of everlasting life. He was greatly beloved not only by his own people, but by all who knew him throughout the Church. (See Weekly Messenger, May 10th, 17th, and 24th, 1837. Also, June 7th and 14th, 1837. Also, Rev. W. W. Bonnell's Sermon, pp. 18-21. Also, Mess., June 10th, 1840.)

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### REV. JOHN J. UNGERER.

MR. UNGERER was examined by a committee of Synod, in Frederick, in 1826, which recommended that he remain yet one year in the Seminary at York, Pa. Synod, however, allowed him to visit pastorless churches, and especially those in Ly-

coming County, Pa., as a catechist ; but directed that at the same time he should prosecute his studies under the direction of the Rev. Y. H. Fries. This he did. In September, 1827, he was ordained during the meeting of Synod at York, Pa.

A writer in the May No., 1832, of the "Evangelische Zeitung" of the Reformed Church, gives the following account of him and his work. "It is now five or six years since he first presented himself before the Synod at Frederick, and, after a discussion, of which I do not know the particulars, was received as a licentiate. After this he continued his studies with the Rev. Mr. Shindel, in Sunbury, and afterwards under the care of Rev. Yost Henry Fries, and received his first call from the St. Peter's congregation, in Shamokin. At that time, however, the same spirit did not reign in that region which, as we hope, has since banished many evil customs that prevailed in regard to the Sabbath, as also in every-day life, and Mr. Ungerer was compelled sadly to experience that his zeal was taken by many as fanaticism. A new call which he received transferred his labors to the charge of the St. Jacob's and St. Peter's congregations, in Columbia County, while he still resided in the bounds of the first St. Peter's church. But alas ! here, too, he had to suffer not a little from persons destitute of true piety, and from the surrounding unbelief nourished by false doctrine and pernicious sects ; but he also enjoyed the comfort of finding many among his members in whose hearts a living piety had taken root, and who, by a faithful attendance upon public worship, private religious exercises, the worthy celebration of the Holy Supper, as well as by a pious course of life, became examples to others. In the year 1828 he was also called by the congregation in Catawissa to be their pastor ; but certain circumstances, which I prefer not to mention, hindered him from yielding to their request. Last summer, at the earnest solicitation of a friend, he visited a neglected region in Franklin and Moreland Townships, Lycoming County. The inhabitants there had not for a long time heard the gospel preached. They were as lost and erring sheep. Their children grew up without instruction, and thus religion and Christianity must necessarily more and more die away among them. The parents felt

increasingly the necessity of spiritual attention for themselves and their children. They earnestly besought Mr. Ungerer to come to their aid, and he could not deny their request. Although he was during the last year compelled to preach at nine different points, yet he visited them faithfully every two weeks to preach the gospel and instruct their children, who, though some of them had to come ten and twelve miles, attended promptly and in large numbers. The word was received with great desire, and the Lord accompanied it richly with His blessing. The congregations were particularly large on communion days, and the power of God's Spirit was such that the people forgot to think of temporal eating and drinking, and, when the service had lasted from three to four hours, could hardly persuade themselves to retire from the joyful tabernacle of the Lord."

In 1832 Mr. Ungerer accepted an agency for the American Sunday-School Union, to promote the cause of Sunday-schools in the church.

In the Messenger of the German Reformed Church, February, 1833, we find the following: "The Rev. Mr. Ungerer, acting under the authority of the Board of Missions, has formed a German church, consisting chiefly of emigrants lately arrived from Germany, in Washington City. They have given him a call to become their pastor, and promise to support him; he has accepted the call, and is making arrangements to remove his family forthwith. Mr. Ungerer administered the Lord's Supper to about two hundred communicants, who are members of this congregation. Many thanks are due to Mr. Stansberry, one of the officers of Government, and a pious member of one of the Presbyterian churches in the city, for his efficient and unsolicited co-operation. To him, indeed, the origination of this mission is to be attributed."

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### REV. GEORGE A. SHOOK.

MR. SHOOK was born May 3d, 1803. He graduated at Union College, Schenectady, at the age of twenty-one. After this he

entered the Theological Seminary of the German Reformed Church, then located at Carlisle, Pa., and studied theology under Dr. Mayer. He was ordained to the holy ministry in 1827. He was an industrious student and an exemplary Christian. During his classical and theological course he applied himself so closely that his health failed, and thus he became disqualified for the active duties of the ministry; consequently, he never served any pastoral charge. Consumption slowly, but surely, did its work, and he died at Redhook, New York, May 14th, 1837, in the thirty-fifth year of his age. (Weekly Mess., May 24th, 1837.)

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### REV. JOHN HAUTZ.

MR. HAUTZ studied theology under the Rev. J. P. Shindel, of Sunbury, Pa., a Lutheran minister. He was licensed and ordained in 1828, having presented a call from five congregations, located partly in Northumberland and partly in Schuylkill County. (Syn. Min., 1828, pp. 15, 24.) In this first charge he labored very successfully for several years. Thence he was called to Bernville, in Berks County, where he labored up to the time of his death, which occurred December 28th, 1832, in the thirtieth year of his age. He was removed in the vigor of life and in the midst of great usefulness, much beloved and sincerely mourned for by the people who had learned to know his worth. "Spirit, that hast loved the Lord Jesus Christ and freely obeyed His holy call, peace be with thee, and the Lord's rich mercies around thee." (Mess., January, 1833.)

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### REV. PHILIP KNÖPFEL.

MR. KNÖPFEL came to this country a short time previous to 1831, bringing good testimonials, and was accordingly received as a member of Synod. In 1831 the committee on missions employed him to visit and take charge of the destitute German settlements in Western New York. His learning, connected with apparent modesty and zeal, inspired the hope that much good

would result from his labors in this field ; but he disappointed all expectations. He neglected his work, and, after having injured the cause which he was sent to honor and sustain, he left again for Europe. Would that this had been the last time the Church was deceived and wounded by such plausible foreign vagabonds

Who left their country for their country's good,  
And bravely came to ours to get — their food !

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### REV. JACOB LEYMEISTER.

MR. LEYMEISTER studied in the Seminary of the German Reformed Church, at Carlisle, Pa., and was ordained to the office of the ministry at the meeting of Synod in Harrisburg, 1831, and soon after took charge of two congregations, Zion's and White Oak, in Lancaster County, Pa. He died in Orwigsburg, Schuylkill County, Pa., July 12th, 1833. (Mess., Feb., 1832, and Sept., 1833; also, Syn. Min., 1833, p. 39.) He is said to have been a young man of much promise, and had contemplated going to the South as a missionary. — D. Y. H.

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### REV. STEPHEN STALEY.

MR. STALEY was licensed to preach the gospel in 1832. Soon after he took charge of congregations in Virginia. Rev. G. H. Martin, pastor of the Lovettsville charge, says, "The Rev. Stephen Staley took charge of this congregation in 1833 or 1834. He was in very feeble health, and, consequently, his labors were often interrupted. He is still held in grateful remembrance by a great many here. He was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost."

In the Minutes of 1836, his congregations are put down as Loudon and Springfield. He resided at Shepherdstown, Va. Though we have written a number of letters on the subject, we have not succeeded in getting the facts necessary for a sketch

of this good man's life. The following, communicated by a friend, is sadly interesting :

"After he had spent his strength and substance in the ministry, he had some hope of gaining a living by a school in Maryland. He undertook it, and was succeeding well, when a call was presented to him to labor in Shenandoah County, Va. He could not resist the call, gave up all, and soon fell in the harness. For the six months' labor which cost him his life, he received nothing of the amount promised to him faithfully !"

Mr. Staley is spoken of as a most excellent man. He has a son in the ministry, Rev. George L. Staley, now (1857) Principal of Mount Washington Female College, near Baltimore, Md.

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### REV. HAMILTON VAN DYKE.

MR. VAN DYKE studied theology at York, Pa., under Rev. Dr. Mayer. He was ordained at the meeting of Synod, at Frederick, in September, 1832. He was soon after invited to Chambersburg to preach English, as assistant pastor to the Rev. F. Rahausen. He remained here only four months, when, owing to ill health, he was obliged to resign. At the meeting of Synod in 1833, he asked for a dismission to connect himself with the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church, which was granted. He is said to have died at Schoharie, New York. There was also a Rev. William Van Dyke,—perhaps a brother,—elected as pastor of the Water Street charge, in Huntington County, March 12th, 1826. He is said still to live near Dixon, Illinois.

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### REV. J. S. REGNIER.

MR. REGNIER came from Switzerland, and succeeded Rev. Henry Giesy, in the Berlin charge, Somerset County, Pa. He remained there only one year, from November 3d, 1834, to November, 1835, when he removed to Bethlehem, Ohio, and after some years died there.



## REV. DECKER.

THIS was an aged minister, of whom little is known. He died some years ago, in a good old age, near Friedensburg, and about six miles from Pottsville, in Schuylkill County, Pa. Rev. Philip Mayer preached his funeral sermon. His descendants are said to reside in George's Valley, Centre County, Pa.

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## REV. FREDERICK WILLIAM BÖTTICHER.

MR. BÖTTICHER was a native of the Prussian province of Saxony, and was educated and ordained in his native country. The year in which he came to America is not definitely known.

He was regarded as a good scholar, and as being well qualified for the office of the ministry. He first comes to view in the Minutes of the Synod of Ohio, in the year 1835, and during that year was received as an advisory member of the Synod; and subsequently received into full connection with Synod.

He is reported, in the Synodical Minutes, as having received permission by Synod to visit Carrollton, and surrounding congregations, in Carroll County, Ohio, and, if satisfactory arrangements could be agreed upon between them, to serve as pastor. It does not, however, appear that this was carried into effect, for he served two congregations somewhere about Captain's Creek, Belmont County, Ohio, from 1835 to 1837. After 1837 his name disappears from the Minutes, and nothing further is known of him. (Min., O. Syn., 1835-37. Letter of Rev. I. H. Reiter.) — D. Y. H.

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## REV. JOHN GERBER.

MR. GERBER was a native of Switzerland, and was educated at the Basel Mission Institute. He was subsequently set apart to the gospel ministry, and sent as a missionary to Africa, where, amid many hindrances and trials, he preached the gospel of Christ for nine years. At the end of this period, in conse-

quence of suffering from the effects of a dangerous disease incident to that country, the Mission Institute recalled him to his native country, and, unwilling that he should become an early victim to his calling, directed his attention to the United States of North America. In obedience to their implied wishes, he emigrated to this country about the year 1834 or 1835.

Having arrived in America, he took up his abode at Basil, Fairfield County, Ohio, where a number of his countrymen were living, and appeared as an applicant before the Synod of Ohio, convened June 6-10, 1835, at Tarlton, Pickaway County, Ohio. In view of the evidence he gave of his orthodoxy, ability, and moral worth, he was received as an advisory member for the current synodical year. He was at this time preaching to the Reformed congregation at Basil; and from 1835 to 1840 he was laboring in and about Newark, Licking County, Ohio.

After 1840 nothing is noted of him in the Synodical Minutes, and perhaps he either retired from the practical duties of the ministry, or more likely died about that time. (Min., O. Syn., 1835-40. Letter of Rev. I. H. Reiter.) — D. Y. H.

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### REV. W. E. CORNWELL.

WM. E. CORNWELL was born in Philadelphia, December 8th, 1807. On the 4th of September, 1826, he united himself with the First Presbyterian church, Northern Liberties. In the year 1829 he commenced studying for the ministry under the care of his pastor, Dr. James Patterson. In consequence of not having a regular classical education, the Presbytery were unwilling to ordain him, and he afterwards entered the ministry under the sanction of the Reformed Church. In 1836 he was licensed to preach the gospel, and at a meeting of the Philadelphia Classis, held May, 1838, at Wentz's church, Worcester, Montgomery County, he was ordained to the holy ministry, and took charge of the Kensington German Reformed church, where he labored until the year 1842, when he

removed to the Pleasantville church, and became their pastor. That church then being in its infancy and unable to render him the necessary support, he took, in connection with Pleasantville, the congregation of Böhm's, in Whitpain, Montgomery County. In these two churches he continued to preach and labor until the spring of 1850, when he resigned his pastoral care of Böhm's, and took, in connection with Pleasantville, the church at Whitemarsh. With these two churches he labored until finally he left the Reformed Church entirely. His labors in these churches were abundantly blessed. His farewell sermon to the congregation of Böhm's was preached in the spring of 1850, from the following words: "Finally, brethren, farewell." This sermon will long be remembered. During his stay in the Reformed Church (fourteen years), he was universally esteemed. He had not received a regular theological education. In his preaching he was plain, simple, and easily understood. While laboring in this field his mind became troubled on the subject of baptism. In the autumn of 1850 he made application to the Rev. Mr. Smith, pastor of the Hatborough Baptist church, and was immersed by him directly after. Soon after his immersion in October, he moved to Norristown and took charge of the church there; where he remained until July, 1853. In that year he accepted a call from the Bridgeton, N. J., Baptist church, and removed to that place, where he preached until September, 1856. Resigning his last charge, he accepted a call to Princeton, N. J., where he labored until death removed him on the 29th of March, 1857, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and having been in the ministry twenty-six years. On the Friday following, April 3d, his remains, in accordance with his own request, were interred in the cemetery connected with the Princeton College.

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### REV. NATHAN A. KEYES.

MR. KEYES was born at Toilton, New Hampshire, December 26th, 1807. His early life was spent at Pelham, N. H., where his religious character was formed under the instructions

of Dr. Church. At the age of twenty, he gave himself to the service of Christ, and soon after commenced preparation for the ministry of the gospel. He graduated at Dartmouth with honor, in 1835, and studied theology at Andover and at Lane Seminary, maintaining the character of a diligent and successful scholar and a consistent Christian. Early in his course of studies, the missionary cause engaged his attention, and in due time he was appointed by the A. B. C. F. M. to the Syrian Mission. With his wife, he sailed for Beyroot, in 1840, and he labored in connection with that mission during the four subsequent years. Political and other disturbances in that country during those years, combined with his impaired health, induced him to return to America, with the approbation of the Board, at the close of the summer of 1844. In the spring of 1847, having previously spent some time in ministerial labor in Charlemont and South Royalton, Mass., he was called to the pastoral care of the German Reformed church in Lancaster, Pa., where he continued to labor with much zeal till October, 1855, when he resigned and removed to Princeton, Ill., where he took charge of a congregation at the time much divided by strife. The anxiety caused him by this distracted charge injuriously affected his already feeble constitution. Having labored here a little over a year, he received a call to the congregational church at Griggsville, Ill. Though he had accepted the call, it was God's good pleasure to remove him by death before he entered his new field. His funeral took place on Tuesday, March 31st, 1857, only two days before he was to have been installed in his new charge. His disease was bilious pneumonia, and the attack was so severe that he passed away in five days.

Mr. Keyes was a man of decided talent, good education, and excellent life. He met death with the full faith and spirit of a tried servant of Christ. On Saturday he quoted these precious words:

“Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are,  
While on his breast I lean my head,  
And breathe my life out sweetly there.”

On the Sabbath he repeated the verse from the 13th part of the 119th Psalm :

“ Had not Thy word been my delight,  
When earthly joys were fled,  
My soul, oppress'd with sorrow's weight,  
Had sunk among the dead.”

About five o'clock, P. M., his wife asked him, “ Do you rely on Christ ? ” and he instantly replied, “ Oh ! yes. He is my trust ; ” and, although it was with the greatest difficulty that he could breathe, he quoted the following verse entire :

“ Thou, O Christ, art all I want,  
More than all in Thee I find,—  
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint;  
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.”

Near the time of his death, which occurred at one o'clock on Sabbath night, when one spoke to him about his soon finding rest in heaven, he answered, “ Yes ; eat of the manna there.” Amidst wandering of mind he gently fell asleep on earth, to awake in heaven.

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### REV. WILLIAM C. WEBB.

MR. WEBB was born August 12th, 1811. From his youth he was of a gentle and amiable disposition, and early became pious. He left favorable worldly prospects behind, and endured many privations to prepare himself for the ministry. Whilst at the College and Seminary he was in the habit of teaching part of the time, in order to raise funds to continue his studies. He was licensed by the Classis of Maryland ; but in the mysterious providence of God he was soon after afflicted with a scrofulous affection, by which he was unfitted for ministerial labor. He spent the following eight years in the patient endurance of untold bodily sufferings. He died in Cavetown, Md., December 26th, 1848, aged 37 years, 4 months, and 14 days. He was devotedly pious, and died in peace. (See Ger. Ref. Mess., Jan. 10th, 1849.)

## REV. GEORGE STRICKLAND.

MR. STRICKLAND was a native of Chester County, Pa. He prosecuted his studies, preparatory to the ministry, in Marshall College, Mercersburg, Pa., and in the Theological Seminary, located at the same place. He completed his course of study, which was partial and irregular, about the year 1840-41. In the Minutes of Synod for 1841 his name appears as a licentiate of the Philadelphia Classis. In 1842 he went to the West, and soon afterwards took charge of the German Reformed church in Circleville, Ohio, where he continued to labor faithfully up to the time of his death, which occurred in 1844.

Mr. Strickland was an excellent young man in every respect. We well remember him as a student at Mercersburg. Few young men could lay claim to so many excellencies as Mr. Strickland. He was extremely modest. His humble, childlike disposition, his gentlemanly demeanor, and his sincere and unfeigned piety, gained him many warm friends. His conduct was such as always to exert a salutary influence on all around him. His ministry was short; but his entire influence was given to the cause of Christ and of righteousness. After a brief service on earth, he was called to his reward in heaven, at the age of thirty-three years. — D. Y. H.

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## REV. JACOB VAN LINGE.

WE first meet with his name in the Minutes of Synod for 1842. At this time he is pastor of the Delaware charge, in Ohio, composed of two congregations. He continued in this field until 1844, when he removed to Buffalo, N. Y. Later still, in 1845, he is reported as pastor in St. Catharine, Upper Canada, when, during the same year, he died. — D. Y. H.

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## REV. FREDERICK W. PLASSMAN.

MR. PLASSMAN was licensed and ordained by the Classis of North Carolina, in 1844, and employed as missionary at China

Grove, Rowan County, N. C. (Syn. Min., p. 24.) In the Minutes of the following year he is reported as without charge. In 1846 he has charge of five congregations, viz., Pilgrim, Sauer's, Peck's, Emanuel's, and Fredericktown, in Davidson County. Here he labored for two years, when he is again reported as not having a pastoral charge—probably owing to ill health. He died at Floral College, Robeson County, N. C., September 30th, 1848, aged thirty-two years. He had been in the ministry of the German Reformed Church about five years. He died in peace.

“His sufferings ended with the day,  
Yet lived he at its close,  
And breathed the long, long night away  
In statue-like repose.  
But when the sun, in all his state,  
Illumed the Eastern skies,  
He passed through glory's morning gate  
And walked in Paradise.”

(Ger. Ref. Mess., Jan. 10, 1849. — D. Y. H.)

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